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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

J.E.H. MACDONALD: THE RELATIONS
OF HIS FINE AND APPLIED ART AND
HIS POETRY

by

ANN HEMINGWAY



A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE
STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN

ART HISTORY

DEPARTMENT OF ART & DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1988

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read,
and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled
J.E.H. MacDonald: The Relations of his Fine and
Applied Art and his Poetry submitted by Ann
Hemingway in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children, my daughters Sarah and Kazumi, and my son Simon, for their loving concern and support. Kazumi's companionable assistance in research and proofreading went far beyond what might reasonably be expected of an eleven year old.

I received immeasurable encouragement and support also from Lois Tottrup, Elizabeth Quinlan, and Lyllian Klimek, in appreciation of which their names are included in this dedication.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines hitherto unexplored areas, commercial art and poetry, in the life and work of J.E.H. MacDonald (1873-1932), a senior member of Canada's first national school of painters, the Group of Seven.

The Introduction examines MacDonald's education, commercial training and employment and traces successive European influences on his commercial art, painting and poetry. Also examined is MacDonald's integration into what would become the Group of Seven, and parallels are drawn between the Group and "The Confederation Poets."

Chapter II traces the theoretical influences on MacDonald's work in all media, the Arts and Crafts movement in particular, and notes certain ambiguities in MacDonald's role as an Canadian artist/craftsman.

Chapter III examines MacDonald's poetry and an underlying transcendentalist form and content which is paralleled in his fine art. Chapter IV analyses the form and content of his commercial art making possible the conclusions of Chapter V that the unifying factor in MacDonald's work, in varying styles and media, was the transcendentalism expressed in his poetry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my Department for its support during the course of this project. I wish to acknowledge an immeasurable debt of gratitude to Dr. J. Sybesma, whose teaching and example have been an inspiration to me since undergraduate days, and to thank her for the assistance and encouragement which made this thesis possible.

I am greatly indebted to my advisors, Professor R. Davey and Professor R.J. Lamb, for their kind guidance and skilled advice. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Lamb for his extraordinary patience with my progress and his generosity in giving me so much of his time and erudition.

I wish to thank my readers, Professor J. Sybesma, Professor S. Jackel and Professor D. Wilkie for their careful reading of my thesis and their most helpful suggestions.

I was the recipient of invaluable assistance from art institutions throughout Canada, too numerous to mention individually. I am particularly grateful to Charles Hill and his staff at The National Gallery and to the staff of The Public Archives, Ottawa. I acknowledge with thanks the kindness of Dennis Reid at The Art Gallery of Ontario in discussing with me a point of concern.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

James Edward Hervey MacDonald (1873-1932) is known and honoured as "one of the key members of the Group of Seven"¹ whose death signalled its demise.² Only a negligible portion of MacDonald's time and energy, however, was spent in the production of fine art. From 1889 until his death, his primary concern was with the study, production and teaching of applied art and, in his spare time, with the writing of poetry. MacDonald's career as a painter did not begin until 1908, when he first publicly exhibited paintings,³ and when he had already been a successful commercial artist for thirteen years.

This thesis discusses MacDonald's applied art in all media, its form and content, its stylistic relationship to European models and MacDonald's adaptation of such models to his contemporary Canadian context. It also examines the relationship between MacDonald's applied and fine art and the importance to both of his transcendentalism and the poetry which expressed it.

The major sources consulted differ in the periods into which they divide MacDonald's life and work as well as on the basis for such divisions. Some divisions are based on the paintings produced by MacDonald in a given period or place and others are based on stylistic changes. MacDonald himself is sometimes viewed in the context of his own work but more frequently, in the context of the Group of Seven. Paul Duval ends the first section of his monograph with the statement that MacDonald, in his Wind, Rain and Sunshine, October of 1910, (Plate 1) "was now integrating his mastery as a graphic designer into his observations as a painter,"⁴ while Nancy Robertson evidently considers MacDonald's work to have matured earlier when she states that "after his return to Toronto in 1907 MacDonald began to emerge as a serious artist."⁵ Duval's second section starts in 1912, inferring that work up to 1910 was experimental, and that between 1910 and 1912 MacDonald progressively consolidated previous experimentation, this development culminating in Tracks and Traffic of 1912 (Plate 2). Robertson's opinion is that MacDonald's best work was done between 1911 and 1921 and that "during this ten-year period he produced all those canvases now considered so important to the development of Canadian painting and to the formation of a national style."⁶ Duval's third section, "Algoma," commences in 1917 and ends in 1919, and the fourth "The Mountains," begins in 1920 and ends with MacDonald's death in 1932, so that, with the

in 1932, so that, with the exception of the early years, Duval's divisions are based primarily on MacDonald's paintings and their locale. Robertson's divisions are predominantly based on style, and she states that "the Algoma paintings of 1922 brought to an end the first, and major, portion of MacDonald's artistic career."⁷ In Robertson's view, "from 1922 until his death in 1932, MacDonald placed his main emphasis on the basic, monumental structure of nature, which gave further expression to his early interest in design."⁸ Robertson thus divides MacDonald's life and work into two main phases, the second one less important than the first, and demonstrating a reversion to his earlier interest in design.

Dennis Reid and Peter Mellen, concerned with the Group of Seven as a whole, rather than with an individual member, make their divisions in accordance with the growth and formation of the Group. Mellen first mentions MacDonald in the second chapter, "Precedents for the Group of Seven,"⁹ where he is seen as the means by which A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974) formed a link between artists in Montreal and Toronto. Mellen's third chapter, "Early Years in Toronto and the Cult of the North,"¹⁰ encompasses in some detail the periods in MacDonald's life and work approximating Duval's first, second and third sections. Mellen's fourth chapter, "The War Years and Algoma,"¹¹ deals with MacDonald's

organization of the group and its activities in 1919 and 1920. Mellen's sixth chapter, "Art takes to the Road,"¹³ deals with the expanded activities of the Group for almost a decade commencing in 1921 and MacDonald's death is noted in the seventh chapter, "The Later Years,"¹⁴ in which Mellen analyses the influence of the Group of Seven on its successors.

Reid's periods of time are much smaller, and contain concentrations of documented detail on specific stages in the growth of the Group of Seven. Within each designated period,¹⁵ each artist is dealt with in the greatest detail in the context of his relationship to the Group's formation and history while the effect of various European stylistic influences on each artist's work is also traced as the background to the emergence of the Group's eventual style. These stylistic influences reflected not only the erosion of nineteenth century national insularity but also the increasing sophistication of Canadian art and artists and the accelerated transmission of ideas.

One reason for heightened Canadian awareness of the contemporary European art scene was the nineteenth century proliferation of magazines devoted to the arts. One of the most influential of such publications was The Studio, founded in 1893 by Charles Holme (1848-1923). Because it was successful from its inception, later periodicals imitated its

style and format and it forced established publications like The Magazine of Art to change to a similar format and content.

The "Art Nouveau" style adopted by The Studio was synonymous with modernity while at the same time its organic forms opposed industrialisation. The content of the magazine was as invigorating as its design; its first issue, in April 1893, stressed the Arts and Crafts movement's concept of "Artists as Craftsmen." The work of Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898) was published for the first time in this first issue, introduced by Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), the disciple and future biographer of Whistler.

As Russell Harper states, "the first and most revolutionary European influence to enter Canada at the end of the nineteenth century was the "art for art's sake theory of Whistler and his associates"¹⁶ transmitted to a degree by the Canadian lecture tour made by Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) in 1882 but furthered even more by examples of specially commissioned work by Whistler and Beardsley in The Studio. But the soft tonalities of Whistler's style had only limited application in Canada and his hedonistic lifestyle and philosophy found little support among Canadian artists.

The work of William Morris (1834-1896) himself and also

of Morris & Company was consistently shown, as were works by the Pre-Raphaelites. Frequently featured also was the work of the controversial Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), Morris' apprentice from 1882 to 1884. Brangwyn completed in 1921 a mural commission for the Manitoba Legislature and in 1925 MacDonald stopped over at Winnipeg to see this "fine decoration by Brangwyn."¹⁷ Works by Walter Crane (1845-1915) and Charles Robert Ashbee (1863-1942), were featured, among many others. In an innovative series presaging modern "do-it-yourself" articles, readers of The Studio were instructed in numerous media by professional English artist/designers. Exhibitions of the Royal British Colonial Society further enhanced the reputations and influence of these artists and designers when their work was seen overseas.

The influence of The Studio on international art circles, especially in the British Empire, was also increased when The Studio gave feature coverage to colonial artists. The magazine's coverage of Canada, for instance, effectively summarized the Canadian art scene in 1899. It noted the need to raise standards, but commented favourably on the genre painter George Agnew Reid (1860-1947) and the proto-Impressionist Laura Muntz (1860-1930).¹⁸ In 1900, not only Reid and Muntz but also the Impressionists William Brymner (1855-1925) and Maurice Cullen (1866-1934) were singled out for praise.¹⁹ In 1911, another Impressionist,

James Wilson Morrice (1865-1924) was praised along with Brymner and Cullen²⁰ while in 1912 the greatest approbation was given to MacDonald for his Impressionist "tour de force," Tracks and Traffic. (Plate 2) This work was seen as symbolic of Canada's industrial advancement while the forthcoming 1913-1914 Canadian Exhibition announced in the same issue was heralded as a strengthening link between the "Mother Country and the Great Dominion."²¹ Works by Lawren Harris (1885-1970) and J. W. Beatty (1869-1941) were also praised in 1912 and between 1913 and 1920 MacDonald's work was consistently praised, as well as was the work of other future group members like Tom Thomson (1877-1917), A.Y. Jackson (1882-1974), F. H. Varley (1881-1969), and Arthur Lismer (1885-1969).²²

Paintings of his snow-covered homeland by the Norwegian Fritz Thaulow (1847-1906), featured in The Studio in 1897,²³ had inspired Canadian artists like Maurice Cullen²⁴ in their choice of a northern subject and nearly twenty years later the Group of Seven would be equally influenced by the northern subject matter and Art Nouveau style of Scandinavian artists²⁵ featured in The Studio.²⁶

Original works by many of these Scandinavian artists had an even greater impact on Harris and MacDonald when they viewed them together at the Scandinavian exhibition in

Buffalo in 1913. "The painting of Canada's first concerted national movement, that of Thomson and the Group of Seven, can [thus] be described as a direct outgrowth of the first phase of northern Symbolist landscape painting."²⁷

As Nasgaard states,

Throughout the North Symbolist yearnings for transcendental experience, coupled with Synthetist perception, opened doors to native wilderness scenery that Naturalism had ignored, but that quickly became established as the embodiment of national character [so that] Thomson and the Group of Seven, usually seen as Canada's first national school, could readily identify with Scandinavian Symbolist landscape painting when they came into contact with it two decades after its inception.²⁸

When viewed in this larger international context of a search for national identity by other colonial or northern artists, the work of MacDonald and the Group of Seven gains an added coherence and unity in its similar use of exclusively national themes such as the northern landscape. In both Harris' Theosophy and MacDonald's Transcendentalism, the North represented a pristine source of personal spiritual renewal and in Theosophy it also represented the spirit of Canada.²⁹ Thus their journeys together to the North epitomized philosophical and spiritual ideals for members of the Group in addition to the functional reasons of convenience, mutual support and defence underlying their "collaborative" banding together. The North and their journeys to it also became symbolic of man's confrontation with untamed nature, and in its widest terms, of civilized

man, the universal coloniser, expanding into unknown territories, as had the first British colonists in North America, New Zealand and Australia.

It should be noted also that in the absence of any acceptable indigenous cultural resources in these colonies upon which to draw, these first colonists relied exclusively upon their predominantly English cultural background.

However, the new British colonists, though they eschewed the indigenous aboriginal cultures, were quick to learn and absorb aboriginal techniques of survival in a "harsh and lonely land."³⁰ To an arguable degree, the nineteenth century interest in adventure and exploration represented a sophisticated modern use of such survival techniques, not to preserve life in an alien environment, but as a means of escape from the horrors of urban industrialisation.

The camping sorties by members of the Group of Seven into Northern Ontario therefore enhanced their self and group images, allowing them vicariously to be identified on a national level with Canada's Northern explorers and on an international level with British imperialist ideals. On the personal level, such trips served as further joint experiences and the shared painting locales had both a functional and a symbolic purpose.

Such a banding together of a group of artists united by

common ideals and purpose is typical of the English Arts and Crafts Movement. The shared antipathy of its members to the industrial revolution had led to the foundation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in England in 1848 and to their involvement as designers of the applied art produced by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., founded by William Morris in 1861.

By the 1870's, the English Arts and Crafts movement had successfully adapted Morris' ideas to its more functional philosophy and when Morris died in 1896, equipment and staff from his Kelmscott Press were used to maintain and expand his typographical ideals. MacDonald's notes for his typography classes and lectures as well as his own work reflect both a direct influence from Morris and Kelmscott Press and indirect influences from European and American adherents to Morris' ideals.

The importance of this movement has particular reference not only to its Canadian and American emulators, but also to its stylistic influence on MacDonald's art and MacDonald's attempts to adhere to its principles in his life as an artist/craftsman.

George Reid, one of MacDonald's earliest teachers, was a dedicated supporter of the Arts & Crafts ideal and used his office as president of the Ontario Society of Artists to

strengthen Canadian applied arts by having the Society sponsor, in 1902, Canada's first exhibition of applied Art. The success of this exhibition, in which commercial studios participated, resulted in the founding by Reid the same year the Canadian Society of Applied Arts. The Society was dedicated to "the encouragement of original design and original expression according to the example of William Morris, whether in crafts, furniture or posters."³¹

The concern of this Canadian Society for original design in as commercial and modern a form of applied art as posters is indicative of the shortening of the artistic time lag between Europe and North America. The late nineteenth century European poster mania was duplicated almost simultaneously in Canada.

Canadian writers, like Canadian artists, assimilated successive European concepts and forms. Canadian poetry followed the romantic-Victorian traditions of English and American poetry and derived its metaphysics from the "synthesis of evolution and faith, and from the transcendentalism of New England..."³²

MacDonald's published and unpublished personal papers and manuscripts³³ are the sources for a discussion of MacDonald's personal attitudes, particularly towards his commercial work versus his painting and poetry. Most published sources ignore MacDonald's poetry while others

mention it but briefly. Although MacDonald wrote poetry from his teens until his death, some sources imply that it was in 1916 that MacDonald "began to write"³⁴ or "turned to writing"³⁵ poetry or "was encouraged by Professor Barker Fairley to try his hand at poetry."³⁶

While a strong Canadian literary tradition has linked the visual imagery of the "Confederation" poets to the Group of Seven, no previous examination has been made of specific links between the two groups such as their shared nationalist aspirations, transcendentalist philosophies and working lives. The five major "Poets of the Confederation" were William Wilfred Campbell (1858-1918), Duncan Campbell Scott (1862-1947), Bliss Carman (1861-1929), Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943) and Archibald Lampman (1861-1899). All five were born in the same period, to the same Victorian professional class, four being the sons of clergymen and one, Carman, the son of a lawyer. Two of them, Roberts and Carman, were first cousins who went to school together and who were related to Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882). Three of them, Campbell, Lampman and Scott, became civil servants in Ottawa. They were all friends, united by their shared poetic ideals and patriotic dreams, expressed in their common subject matter, the Canadian landscape. Roberts was the original poetic stimulus for Lampman, who stimulated Scott and Scott, together with Roberts, stimulated Roberts' cousin Carman. Analogies between this "Maple Leaf School" of poets

and the "Hot Mush School" of painters are self-evident. Painters and poets alike were interested in each other's disciplines and both groups evidenced interest in non-traditional religions. Scott, who collected Canadian Art and was a friend of Lawren Harris, was interested in Theosophy and Transcendentalism and Roberts and Carman were both Transcendentalists.

MacDonald's own Transcendentalist philosophy, articulated in his poetry, is the unifying motivational factor in all his work. MacDonald's consistent use, in all media, of the same compositional devices and subject matter reflects not only his transcendentalist bias but the equal persistence of his commercial training and experience.

MacDonald was fourteen years old when his father, born in St. Johns, Quebec, returned to Canada from England and settled his family in Hamilton, Ontario, early in 1887. The young MacDonald attended evening art classes at the Hamilton Art School, where his instructors were John Ireland (1854-1915) and Arthur Heming (1870-1940).

In 1889, when he was sixteen, his family moved to Toronto where MacDonald was apprenticed to the Toronto Lithography Company, engravers and lithographers. (Plates 3, 4) Many years later, commencing in 1913, this early training shaped MacDonald's printmaking techniques. During his

apprenticeship, MacDonald's reading included works by the English social reformer, Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) and John Ruskin (1819-1900)³⁷ "while Robert Burns particularly appealed to the young apprentice designer, and the Scottish poet was to remain his lifetime favourite, along with Walt Whitman."³⁸

In 1893, his apprenticeship completed, Macdonald began his working career at C.E. Preston & Co. of Toronto, and also attended evening and weekend classes at the Central Ontario School of Art and Design under William Cruikshank (1849-1922) and George Reid, one of the best-known Canadian genre painters of his generation.

A year later, in 1894, he joined the Art Department of the photo-engraving and advertising company, Grip Limited (Plates 5, 6) which "not only provided employment for artists and craftsmen at a time when support for art was extremely low, but also constituted a training ground for future artists."³⁹ A company like Grip in fact provided "a non-academic training school"⁴⁰ of greater value "than is sometimes admitted."⁴¹ Founded in 1873 as a satirical newspaper, by 1880 Grip Limited had evolved into an engraving firm, and in 1882 became the first in Canada to use photogravure. This new technology, the process block, made possible the striking contrast on a white background of solid blacks, and delicate lines or patterns, impossible with

previous technology. Employees of companies like Grip Limited "were exposed to new techniques and sometimes given the opportunity to experiment with various types of printmaking."⁴² Such companies "featured Canadian subject matter in the advertising and other commercial illustration work they did"⁴³ and their "employees were expected to keep up with the latest British and U.S. publications, especially the illustrated magazines."⁴⁴

Grip Limited was primarily an advertising agency. It represented Canada's expanding economy and Toronto's growth and also demonstrated the practical use in Canada of nineteenth century European ideals, transmitted through Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, into a viable means for groups of individual artists to survive economically.

MacDonald's early years and his training reflect economic and social aspects of a major Canadian city at the turn of the century, as Canada began the shift from colonial status and a rural economy to industrialized nationhood and an urban economy. Grip Limited's growth and expansion into a successful advertising agency reflected such a shift as did the expanding opportunity and scope of MacDonald's freelance art work and teaching.

The inherent contrast in his working life between MacDonald's philosophic ideals and the necessities of

economic survival represented the broad social issues confronting increasingly industrialized societies in the same period. MacDonald's solutions to his personal difficulties similarly reflect national and international solutions to essentially the same social and philosophic problems. Expanding industrialisation and its diversification led to increased and uncontrolled development of natural resources, which in turn led to new roads and railways, increasing the size and number of urban centres. Paradoxically, the new transportation systems which were responsible for urban congestion also provided an escape from it. In 1913, MacDonald and his family and other members of his circle, Varley, Lismer, Carmichael and Johnston, moved their homes to rural areas outside Toronto to avoid the city's accelerated urban sprawl, commuting to work. MacDonald and the Group were able to move further away for their Northern subject matter by means of new railway access routes to previously inaccessible wilderness. The group's formation and its members' economic viability was tied to the urbanization and industrialisation they eschewed but, unlike Reid, they seemed content merely to seize any economic advantages made available and avoid adverse social consequences.

MacDonald's professional advancement, and that of his friends, was paralleled and in many cases assisted by social advancement, and the Group became known to entrepreneurs like Robert S. McLaughlin, of General Motors (Canada) Ltd., and

J.S. McLean, president of Canada Packers Limited, both of whom became important wealthy patrons as their companies expanded to meet the needs of Canada's increasing urbanization and population expansion.

In 1898 MacDonald joined his friends A.A. Martin and T.G. Greene in membership of the Little Billee Sketch Club, until its demise approximately two years later. Archie Martin and two other old friends, Norman Price and William Wallace, had been guests in 1899 at MacDonald's wedding in High Park.

MacDonald, Martin and Greene were also members of the Mahlstick Club, a studio club similar to the Little Billee Sketch Club. Their affectionate regard for MacDonald later led Martin and Green to employ him at the studio they founded in London, England.

Although shy, MacDonald was a witty, charming and compassionate companion and was popular. At Grip Limited, he was well-liked and formed long-lasting friendships with his fellow workers, one of whom, Lewis Smith, introduced him to Harriet Joan Lavis,⁴⁵ whom MacDonald married in 1899. Their only child, Thoreau, was born in 1901.

In 1902, MacDonald had joined the Toronto Art Students' League, dedicated since its formation in 1886 to depiction of the Canadian landscape. A founding member was Robert Holmes (1861-1930) and other members included William Cruikshank,

Charles MacDonald Manly (1855-1924), Frederick H. Brigden (1872-1956) and Charles W. Jefferys (1869-1952). Other particularly good friends of MacDonald who were members included Norman Price and Arthur C. Goode as well as A.A. Martin and T.G. Greene. In addition to sketching trips, the League also held classes for its members. "One of the more important books closely studied ... was Pen Drawing and Pen Draughtsman [sic]: Their Work and their Methods [sic]: A Study of the Art of Today"⁴⁶ published in 1894 by Joseph Pennell (1847-1926), a frequent contributor to The Studio commencing with its first issue. The League published a series of calendars between 1893 and 1904, with exclusively Canadian content based on specific themes such as "Canadian seasons" or "Canada Past," complemented by or complementing Canadian poetry, most often by the Confederation poets. MacDonald's ink drawing of Fish Shanties (Plate 7) was printed in the League calendar for 1902 and he also designed the Calendar's title page for April, 1904. (Plate 8)

In his spare time, especially at weekends, true to the Nulla dies sine linea tenet of the Toronto Art Students' League, MacDonald sketched and wrote poetry in High Park, the Humber Valley and other areas close to Toronto so that there were close relationships in subject matter and visual imagery in his works in both media.

Undoubtedly because of his increased social and artistic

activity, MacDonald found employment and fellowship with a group of old friends and fellow artists dedicated to the ideals of William Morris when, in December of 1903, he went to work as a book designer for the prestigious Carlton Studio in London, founded by Arthur C. Goode and A.A. Martin, assisted by Norman Price and William Wallace. Founded in about 1890, Carlton Studio was the largest and most successful advertising agency in the city.⁴⁷

When in 1904 Joan and Thoreau MacDonald joined J.E.H. in England, they chose to live in Loughton, Essex, near Epping Forest, where MacDonald too sketched in his spare time as he did in High Park, Toronto. October Afternoon, Howard Pond of 1910 (Plate 9) and Nova Scotia of 1898, (Plate 10) typify a Barbizon influence prevalent in Europe and North America at the turn of the century. After viewing a Barbizon exhibition in London MacDonald stated he was inclined to look on himself "as a forest specialist,"⁴⁸ for he had invariably depicted woodland scenes.

After his return from England, in 1907, to work as Head Designer at Grip Limited, and using the freer and more expressive medium of oil paint, MacDonald began to duplicate in his painting the repetitive pattern and rhythmic effects achieved in his early poetry.

MacDonald worked and re-worked his paintings just as he did his poetry, in both media beginning with a linear

notation of a visual image or an outline of an idea which he then built up painstakingly, sometimes over a period of years. Gradually, his pencil sketches became surrounded with notes of possible colour schemes just as words varying the tone of a poetic theme were noted on his draft poems.

Despite his sojourn in England, the genre and woodland scenes depicted by MacDonald prior to 1907 reflect the varying styles of post-Confederation art as it absorbed new tendencies at the turn of the century. In poetry of this period, apart from the obvious influence of Kipling's imperialist subject matter in some poems and Kiplingesque heavily stressed rhythms,⁴⁹ MacDonald himself attested to his reverent admiration for W.B. Yeats,⁵⁰ a disciple of Madame Blavatsky, just as he attributed his original painterly ambition to the Barbizon group. In 1911, MacDonald began an association with the Arts and Letters Club that would continue all his life. Albert H. Robinson (1881-1956), the manager of Grip Limited, was a founding member of this club, formed in 1907 in "revolt from the lack of public interest in the arts in general in Canada."⁵¹ Probably through Robinson's sponsorship, MacDonald was elected to it early in 1911 and the success of the one-man show of his oil sketches he held on its premises in November of the same year led him to resign from his full-time position at Grip Limited in order to devote more time to his art by working as a free-lance commercial artist. From 1912 to the 1920's, he

designed and supervised the construction of the annual Canadian National Exhibition displays and in 1915 designed the first of many window displays for the Robert Simpson Company. He served on the executive of most of the organisations of which he was a member and wrote and gave public and private lectures on art-related subjects.

In January of 1913, MacDonald and Harris visited the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, to see its "Exhibition of Scandinavian Art." Influences attributable to Northern European trends, boldness of outline, enriched colour and tapestry effects, became increasingly apparent in his work as MacDonald moved further afield, northwards, in search of subject matter. He went to Georgian Bay in the Summer of 1912, to Mattawa and the Laurentians in 1913 and to Algonquin Park in 1914. In 1913 a number of small etchings, based on his 1912 and 1913 sketches, demonstrate MacDonald's ease of execution in this exacting medium (Plate 11).

Following his move in 1913 to the quiet village of Thornhill, just outside Toronto, the subject of MacDonald's paintings became more and more rural. This anti-urban bias was echoed in one of his poems in which he railed against the city's encroachment and desecration of its surrounding farmland.⁵² Harper points out that, beginning in 1913, MacDonald "alternated between compositions which are static (as in the late Rocky Mountain landscapes) [Plate 12] and

those with recurring movement, poetical in feeling."⁵³

(Plate 13) A similar contrast of style is demonstrated in poetry of the period, while confirmation is found in his writing of the hardship of MacDonald's commercial work in the city and his creative freedom at Thornhill.

During the same Thornhill period, MacDonald consolidated both his private life and his art. Happy in his new country home, his close friends now his neighbours, MacDonald established the lifestyle he would follow until his death. The Group's new Studio building opened in 1914 and to depict the stronger, harsher light of his new northern subject matter, he reverted to the impressionist techniques he had learned to use to depict the light effects of winter snow in High Park in 1912 while the linear sinuosity of "Art Nouveau" dominated commercial designs like his 1915 poster Belgium (Plate 14) and the 1915-1916 series of summer cottage murals commissioned by Group of Seven patron, Dr. James MacCallum (Plates 15, 16, 17). There are "Art Nouveau" elements also in the pencil sketches (Plate 18) for the Capitals of the Allies Christmas window display completed by MacDonald for the Robert Simpson Company in 1915.

The MacCallum commission had been shared by MacDonald, Lismer and Thomson and provided another joint experience

between these artists. Three of the Group's members (MacDonald, Lismer and Varley) had British working-class backgrounds in the heavily industrialised north of England, where Lismer and Varley had already known each other. The socialism of industrialised areas is expressed by union of the weak against a common foe to achieve improved conditions and, as Dennis Reid states, there was always such a "populist streak"⁵⁴ in Group of Seven ideas. Six of them had commercial art training and the seventh, Harris, had worked as a commercial artist. Five of them, Carmichael, Harris, Jackson, Lismer and Varley had had academic art training. Five of them, MacDonald, Thomson, Lismer, Carmichael and Varley (briefly) had worked together at Grip Limited. They shared the same social milieu and three of them, Harris, MacDonald and Lismer, were members of The Arts and Letters Club. This social status produced peer support for them. It was at the Club that first MacDonald in 1911, and later the whole group, exhibited.

The interest in unorthodox spirituality may have been a contributing factor to the Group's choice of its Northern subject matter from 1914 on, and certainly the spiritual connotations in the work of MacDonald and Harris in particular became another unifying factor. For Harris, Lismer and Varley, "art was synonymous with religion, the highest expression of a society; its role was to raise the spiritual awareness of the community"⁵⁵ while Lismer had once stated

"Thomson sees visions and dreams, his paintings are his visions made articulate."⁵⁶ MacDonald, Thomson and Harris were all interested in poetry and Lismer, Harris and MacDonald all had experience in publishing. Lismer later used his writing to publicise the Group of Seven in A Short History of Painting with a Note on Canadian Art of 1926 and in Canadian Picture Study of 1930.

The common technical approach of individual members of the group to depiction of the north can be explained by their mutual commercial experiences while their individual backgrounds gave them a bias towards English stylistic influences which they adapted to their common purpose. "Art Nouveau," the style with which they were most conversant, was particularly suited to depiction of the Northern landscape. Their choice of style would no doubt have been positively reinforced by a discussion of style in the first issue of The Studio which had stated that excellent works of art have originality expressed with "bold black lines," and "simple flat colours."⁵⁷ In a discussion twenty-two years later, The Studio considers "the new and more individual note" in Canadian painting to be derived from a decorative treatment, which reveals "the spirit of Canadian landscape by means of a rhythmical pattern or design."⁵⁸

To this unified style and subject matter was added a permanent base when, in 1914, the Group acquired its own

Studio Building. The artistic expansion for which the Group was ready, however, was halted by the 1914-1918 war and the dispersal of its membership which left MacDonald as their sole Toronto representative and defender. Works exhibited by him in 1916, among which The Tangled Garden (Plate 19) and The Elements (Plate 20) showed a stylistic consolidation and simplification, attracted unfavourable reviews based partly on the work of the absent Group members. MacDonald vigorously but inadequately tried to defend himself and his friends.

In the early part of 1917, MacDonald was appointed Contributing Editor to The Rebel and Instructor for the Ontario College of Art Summer School. The same year, he was elected to the Executive of the Ontario Society of Artists and to the Canadian National Exhibition hanging committee. Later in 1917, his always frail health failed under the stress of his heavy work load, the vicious criticism of his 1916 work and his grief over the death of Thomson that summer. MacDonald suffered his first stroke while moving from his beloved Thornhill at Joan MacDonald's insistence, and was convalescent until to early 1918. The picture frames, with stylized Canadian motifs, designed by him in 1917, were probably done during this convalescence. (Plates 21, 22)

Only partially recovered, MacDonald was nevertheless forced to continue his drudgery. In the fall of 1918,

however, as Harris' guest, he took his first of three annual box-car trips to Algoma. In December, 1919, he published an article on his second trip in The Lamps,⁵⁹ the magazine of The Arts and Letters Club.

In 1920, the Group of Seven was officially formed and in May held its first exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto in May. In it MacDonald showed three Algoma canvases incorporating heightened colour used in bold rhythmic and monumental forms. One of these, Wild River (Plate 23) of 1919, with a tapestry effect in its brushwork, was his first Algoma landscape. Prints and ink drawings were also made in this period, with one, In the Sugar Bush (Plate 24) being published in The Canadian Forum in 1921 and another, A Breezy Shore (Plate 25) published in 1922. Another drawing, Fisherman's Dory, Nova Scotia was published in The Forum in 1923 and was probably completed in July of the previous year when MacDonald visited Nova Scotia.⁶⁰

MacDonald had little time for his own art, having become in 1921 a permanent Instructor in Decorative and Commercial Design at the Ontario College of Art. In 1927 he was appointed Head of the College's Graphic and Commercial Art Department and, in 1928, he became its Acting Principal. In 1929, MacDonald succeeded his old instructor, George Reid, as Principal of the college, a post he held until his death in 1932.

Following his first appointment to the O.C.A., MacDonald's art production was limited and from 1924 until 1930, was based on his annual trips to the Western Rocky Mountains. To depict his new subject matter, he abandoned both heightened colour and the rounded forms of the Algoma period. His later work became increasingly linear to the point of abstraction and his colours became cool and dry.

MacDonald's architectural treatment of landscape in his later paintings is related to his most important work, completed in 1924, the decoration of the interior of St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto (Plate 26). MacDonald's article on this commission was published in the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in the May/June 1925 issue.⁶¹ The architect for the project, William Rae, "wanted to break away from nineteenth century tradition"⁶² and it is interesting to note that the Byzantine style chosen for the interior decorations of this church approximates MacDonald's own style, with its flattened monumental forms and heightened colour. The method of work typified Morris' ideals, for MacDonald organized completion of the twenty-one paintings by a "co-operative" of Toronto artists. MacDonald himself completed paintings of The Tempest, (Plate 27) The Transfiguration (Plate 28) and The Crucifixion (Plate 29) with flattened, monumental forms almost frieze-like in their lack of depth. His transcendentalism can be presumed to have governed MacDonald's choice of subjects, which are based on a

physical and spiritual movement upwards, from earth through air to a mountain top, or of the earthbound spirit to heaven.

In 1925 MacDonald produced a number of drawings of the Rocky Mountains, mostly in the brush and ink technique, for a portfolio of twenty Group of Seven drawings published by Rous and Mann the following year. One of these drawings was reproduced in The Canadian Forum in January, 1925 (Plate 30) and demonstrated, though to a lesser degree, the same shift towards simplification and abstraction as his Rocky Mountain paintings.

MacDonald designed and completed the decoration of the University College Common Room⁶³ and, in 1928, he completed two architectural commissions in Toronto for the firm of Baldwin and Green.⁶⁴ One was for the interior decoration of the Concourse building, and the other for an apartment block, "The Claridge." (Plate 31) The decorative scheme for the nineteen storey Concourse also had Byzantine features in its use of gold and mosaic and incorporated works by the Confederation Poets "for the people to read while they wait for elevators."⁶⁵ The decoration of the ceiling of the lounge of "The Claridge" incorporated stars and other constellations in a predominantly geometric design.

In September, 1931, MacDonald was elected a full member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (he had been an

associate since 1912) and later that year suffered what is now presumed to be his second stroke. A trip to Barbados in January, 1932 restored him somewhat, but he suffered another stroke on November 22nd and died on November 26th, 1932. A journal he kept during this trip was published forty years later in artscanada (sic). Comparison of the sketches in this journal (Plate 32) with those of his 1915-1922 sketchbook (Plate 33) shows very little difference except for simplification of the subject to a linear pattern. In his earliest and his last landscape sketches, MacDonald shows an identical interest in reducing landscape to patterned block and line, the easily discerned "formula" used throughout his life for both his applied and fine art.

Despite his fragmentary education and training, MacDonald was able to rise to a position of some eminence in both Fine and Applied art. That he was able to do so, however, was due partly to contemporary Canadian economic expansion, which produced the patrons who hired him and bought his work. Moreover, his career benefited from rapid urbanisation, for his acceptance as a "clubman" in a particular strata of Toronto society was in many instances the basis of his advancement. MacDonald's perpetual shortage of money, documented by the monetary additions and subtractions which litter his personal papers, was common knowledge among his peers and until his death, evoked not only charity, but at times commissions. In marked contrast

to Carmichael and Casson, MacDonald gave up his lucrative fulltime employment as chief designer at Grip Limited (even though he had a family to support) for the uncertain income of an independent artist/designer. This decision was presumably not made to free himself from commercial work, for this he continued even when the recipient of a then munificent teaching salary of \$2,000.00 p.a. in addition to his fine art income. An undercurrent of profound discontent runs throughout MacDonald's life, expressed most cogently in his poetry, so that it was not until he was close to death in 1932 that he could write

Few the words we need to say,
Striving on our upward way:
Two suffice to praise and pray,
- "Perfect now."⁶⁷

NOTES

Chapter I

Introduction

1 Nancy E. Robertson, William J. Withrow, introd., J.E.H. MacDonald, R.C.A., 1873-1932 (Toronto: The Art Gallery of Toronto, 1965) p. 3.

2 Charles C. Hill, Canadian Painting in the Thirties (Ottawa: The National Gallery of Canada, 1975) p. 23.

3 MacDonald first exhibited his work (Winter Moonlight) in February 1908, at the Ontario Society of Artists' Exhibition and also, in August of the same year, at the Canadian National Exhibition.

4 Paul Duval, The Tangled Garden: The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald (Scarborough, Ontario: Cerebrus/Prentice Hall, 1978) p. 26.

5 Robertson. p. 6.

6 Ibid. p. 7.

7 Ibid. p. 11.

8 Ibid. p. 11.

9 Peter Mellen, The Group of Seven (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973) pp. 6-15.

10 Ibid. pp. 16-44.

11 Ibid. pp. 45-97.

12 Ibid. pp. 98-111.

13 Ibid. pp. 112-183.

14 Ibid. pp. 184-202.

15 Dennis Reid, The Group of Seven (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970) Reid's stages in the formation the Group of Seven are:

Pre-1910: Schooling,
1910-1913: Towards a "Hot Mash School" in
Toronto,
1914: The Algonquin School,
1915-1918: The War Years,
1919-1920: The First Exhibition of the
Group of Seven,
1921-1924: Towards Recognition,
1925-1931: The National School.

16 J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada (1966 rpt;
Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1969) p. 245.

17 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. 1,
1925 Notebook, Public Archives, Ottawa, Canada.

18 Charles Holme, Ed., "Studio Talk," The Studio, Vol.
17, 1899, p. 62.

19 "J. G.," "Studio Talk," The Studio, 20, (1900), pp.
132-134.

20 "H. M. L.," [H. Mortimer Lamb], "Studio Talk," The Studio, 53, (1911), pp. 160-165.

21 "E. S.," "Studio Talk," The Studio, 57, (1912), pp.
249-251.

22 The Studio: Vol. 58, 1913; Vol. 62, 1914; Vols
65/66, 1915-1916; Vols 65/66/67/68 1916; Vols 70/71/72,
1917; Vols 72/73, 1918; Vol. 76, 1919, Vol. 79, 1920.

23 Gabriel Mourey, "Fritz von Thaulow, the Man and the
Artist," The Studio, 11, (1897), pp. 3-16.

24 Barry Lord, The History of Painting in Canada: Toward
a People's Art (Toronto: NC Press, 1976) p. 108.

25 Ibid. p. 123.

26 The Studio, Vol. 6, 1895-1896, pp. 227-231; Vol. 3,
1896, pp. 221-223; Vol. 10, 1897, pp. 201-203, 260-263;
Vol. 11, 1897, pp. 266-268; Vol. 12, 1897, pp. 39-43, p. 58,
pp. 162-167, pp. 266-269; Vol. 13, 1898, pp. 164-170; Vol.
15, 1898-1899, pp. 137-139; Vol. 17, 1899, pp. 57-78; Vol.
18, 1899, pp. 74-82, p. 141-143; Vol. 48, 1909, pp. 75-76;
Vol. 50, 1910, pp. 327-328; Vol. 54, 1911, pp. 173-185;
Vol. 55, 1912, pp. 145-147, 330-332; Vol. 56, 1912, pp.
159-160; Vol. 57, 1912-1913, pp. 108-121, pp. 159-160, pp.

335-338, Vol. 62, 1914, pp. 213-223. These articles on Scandinavian Art are, among many others, the most pertinent in their content and year of publication.

27 Roald Nasgaard, The Mystic North: Symbolist Landscape Painting in Northern Europe and North America 1890-1940 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1984) p. 8.

28 Ibid. p. 7.

29 Transcendentalism and Theosophy held in common a belief in the superiority of intuitive processes, and individual creativity, through which direct communication could be established with the "oversoul" of Transcendentalism or the "universal soul" of Theosophy. Both were pantheistic and believed communion with their higher spiritual sources was enhanced by pristine nature, which Theosophists believed to be a source of a cosmic purifying force. Scattered references throughout MacDonald's notebooks refer to Theosophy and Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) as topics of discussion among the Group. Note also:

Karl Klinck, ed., Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English (1965 rpt; Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1976) p. 80:

"His [Richard Maurice Bucke (1837-1902)] Cosmic Consciousness (1901), although seldom found in theological libraries, has been avidly read by a circle of devotees ever since its publication. Its influence has been by no means negligible in Canada itself, where the intellectual generation represented in painting by the Group of Seven was strongly tinged with theosophical ideas."

30 Tom Marshall, Harsh and Lonely Land: The Major Canadian Poets & the making of a Canadian Tradition (Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press, 1979)

31 Robert Stacey, Introd., The Canadian Poster Book: 100 Years of the Poster in Canada (Agincourt, Ontario: Methuen Publications, n/d) p. x.

32 Klinck, p. 234.

33 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vols I, II and III, Public Archives, Ottawa, Canada.

34 Duval, p. 82.

35 Mellen, p. 68.

36 Hunter, p. 19.

37 Duval, p. 15.

38 Ibid. pp. 15-16.

39 Patricia Ainslie, Images of the Land: Canadian Block Prints 1919-1945 (Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1984) p. 19.

40 Lord, p. 118.

41 Holme, Ed., "Studio Talk," The Studio, 86, (1923), pp. 57-58.

42 Ainslie, p. 19.

43 Lord, p. 118.

44 Ibid. p. 118.

45 Robertson, p. 13. In an entry for 1899 in the Chronology of MacDonald's life and work, Harriet Joan MacDonald's maiden name is cited as "Levis" rather than "Lavis."

46 William Colgate, Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development (1943 rpt; Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1967) p. 46.

47 Walter Shaw Sparrow, Advertising and British Art: An Introduction to a Vast Subject (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head Limited, 1924) p. 174, note no. 23.

48 Robertson, p. 6.

49 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers." File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File "Misc. Poems 1917-1918, n.d." MacDonald's undated poem, "Captain Scott," exemplifies both the imperialist content and the heavily stressed rhythms associated with the author of "Gunga Din":

"Why seek the pole?" the cynic says
"why squander life in such a quest
Why dare the storm and trackless ways
To put a scientific test?"

But the brave soul who hears the call
To search and find, heeds not the sneer -
He presses on what e'er befall
and cleaves a path through doubt and fear

And though his enterprise should fail,
 And he lie frozen at the feet
 Of the grim heights he dared assail
 Still does the heart of Mankind beat

With stronger pulse, with deeper love,
 With nobler daring for his death:
 And he who died his faith to prove
 Quickens a world with his last breath.

His deed awakes a nation's soul;
 It calls on all to do and dare
 Whether they sit in high control
 Or plod the round of humblest care.

"Why seek the pole?" the doubters ask;
 "Why squander life in such a quest,"
 He answers not who did the task:
 Content he lies in honored rest."

50 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File "Poems T - Y, 1918-1929, n.d." Public Archives, Ottawa, Canada. In the first stanza of his W.B. Yeats, written when William Butler Yeats (1856-1939) visited The Arts and Letters Club in Toronto, MacDonald states:

A spirit from the mountain top,
 Came down and spake with us a while,
 In human speech, with human ways,
 But God beneath his smile.

MacDonald continues by sadly comparing the difference between his own and Yeats' lives, but avers that Keats will be a source of inspiration to him forever.

51 Colgate, p. 74.

52 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File: "D-L (1917? [sic] -1931, n/d" Improvements, n/d.

53 Harper, p. 275.

54 Reid, p. 9.

55 Hill, p. 15.

56 O.J. Firestone, The Other A.Y. Jackson (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979) p. 182, quoted from a talk given by Lismer at the Art Gallery of Toronto on January 30th, 1942.

57 Holme, Ed., "Studio Talk," The Studio, 1, (1893), p. 7.

58 -----, Ed., "Studio Talk," The Studio, 69, (1916), p. 64.

59 J.E.H. MacDonald, "A.C.R. 10557," The Lamps, [Toronto], (December 1919), pp. 35-39.

60 Mellen, p. 210.

61 J.E.H. MacDonald, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," The Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, II (May/June 1925) pp. 85-92.

62 Hunter, p. 30.

63 Hunter, p. 31.

64 Ibid. p. 31.

65 Thoreau MacDonald, Notebooks, (Moonbeam, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 1980) p. 90.

66 Doris Huestis Speirs, trans., "J.E.H. MacDonald's West Indian Journal," artscanada, XXIX No. 5, Issue No. 174/175, (Dec. 1972/ Jan. 1973) pp. 17-36.

67 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File "M-Q 1918-1932, n.d." Perfect Now, (MS), March, 1932.

CHAPTER II

Theoretical influences on the work of J.E.H. MacDonald in all media.

J.E.H. MacDonald's life and work as an artist/craftsman demonstrated his adherence to the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement. Important sources for this adherence can be discovered in an examination of MacDonald's early years, while a survey of the history of the Arts and Crafts movement itself and its protagonists can isolate certain Arts and Crafts concepts particularly influential on MacDonald.

In the 1890's, when he was in his late twenties, MacDonald read the works of John Ruskin, poet, artist and critic, who, with the architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), had "laid the emotional and idealistic foundations of the Arts and Crafts Movement."¹ Although MacDonald's conscious adherence to prevalent contemporary Arts and Crafts concepts is demonstrable, his fragmentary art education would preclude an understanding of the historical basis of such concepts.

Both Ruskin and Pugin had analysed the underlying principles of Gothic design. In Contrasts,² published by Pugin in 1834, he advocated a return to the medieval social and spiritual values epitomised in Gothic Architecture and in his 1841 True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture,³ his systematic analysis of Gothic design articulated principles stressing functionality that were as pertinent in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as they had been in the Middle Ages. "This belief in the functional nature of ornament was shared by Owen Jones"⁴ (1809-1874), among other contemporary architects. In MacDonald's lecture notes for a Teachers' Course, "Design," given by him in the summers of 1922 and 1924, he similarly stresses the importance of function in design which he designates as "Harmony," a combination of "fitness to purpose" and the integration of "form and idea,"⁵ In the same lecture notes, MacDonald also lists nine design principles which he says "have the official sanction of South Kensington."⁶ The Grammar of Ornament,⁷ published in 1856 by Owen Jones, was used as a text in the first English Schools of Design. Although formal in his design approach, Jones' illustrations were a point of departure for the Arts and Crafts movement while "the spiritual and aesthetic values of the Arts and Crafts movement - as compared to the secular and practical ones of Owen and his followers - owe their most

distinctive debt to the influence of Welby Northmore Pugin.⁸ Pugin was also the precursor "of attitudes that were to become fundamental to the Arts and Crafts Movement."⁹

As an innovative adjunct to his architectural practice, in 1836, Pugin gathered together a group of designers organized in the competitive production of Applied Art, setting a precedent for such groups in the Arts and Crafts movement. The grouping together of artists and craftsmen, in commercial studios like Grip Limited, derives ultimately from such groups, which represent a modern development of the Medieval guild. The erection of the Studio Building in 1914 to house MacDonald and his friends, and their completion there of shared commissions, such as the MacCallum murals, (Plates 15, 16, 17) was also derived from this guild concept.

Pugin had demonstrated not only the relationship between Architecture and the Applied Arts that Jones would stress but also the role of the artist/craftsman, for he designed and produced decorations and furnishings in a wide range of media. For this and other related reasons, "the Arts and Crafts generation recognized him as a pioneer in their cause."¹⁰

This ability to work successfully in varying media, as MacDonald has been shown to do, is a dominant characteristic

of the ideal artist/craftsman, melding the Applied and the Fine Arts in the Arts and Crafts Movement. MacDonald, however, reversed the usual earlier pattern in which Fine Art professionals, predominantly architects, (Pugin, Street, Lethaby, etc.) became designers in the Applied Arts, for MacDonald's Applied Art was the basis of his later Fine Art production.

Like Pugin, Ruskin was also concerned with the precepts of consistently good design and his works were the theoretical basis of the Arts and Crafts movement. In The Seven Lamps of Architecture¹¹ published by him in 1849, each of seven chapters related specific Gothic architectural components (divorced from Catholicism, however) to the ethical and philosophical considerations Ruskin considered to be the bases of their physical strength and beauty. The need to improve the design of the products of English industrialisation had stimulated British Government interest in the concepts of Pugin, Ruskin and their successors and public interest in design was aroused and maintained by magazines like The Studio.

Ruskin's philosophy would have been appealing to the idealistic young MacDonald, especially Ruskin's stress on the importance of "the manual aspect of the study of art"¹² and his advice to students "to do something daily with their hands, to learn by doing."¹³ Such an admonition would have

had a particular relevance to a young man who had only recently completed a laborious apprenticeship and whose first job thereafter was as a fledgling designer at Grip Limited, where "no doubt he made many careful drawings of patent leather boots, hot-air furnaces and other contemporary commodities."¹⁴

During his apprenticeship, MacDonald enrolled in evening and weekend classes at the Central Ontario School of Art and Design, where one of his instructors was George Reid. "There is no doubt that George Reid had a strong early influence upon J.E.H. MacDonald."¹⁵ In 1896, Reid, an advocate of Arts and Crafts ideals,¹⁶ had been elected President of the Ontario Society of Artists and had been the motivating force in the formation of "The Toronto Guild of Civic Art." This Guild was similar to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (S.P.A.B.) founded in the spring of 1877 by William Morris, of whose theories Reid was an ardent advocate. Morris' cardinal principle, upon which all his theories were based, related closely to Pugin and Ruskin, for Morris believed that a designer had to have personal knowledge of the medium in which he worked and an understanding of the processes of design necessarily gained by personal experience, "learned at first hand."¹⁷

In 1853, in his first year at Oxford, Morris had been so influenced by Ruskin's writings that he abandoned his

original religious vocation for architecture, and in 1856, after completing a rather minimal degree, he began his architectural studies in the office of George Edmund Street (1824-1881) in Oxford. At the end of 1856, influenced by Ruskin's protege, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) and other members of The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Morris abandoned architecture and studied painting instead.

Morris, however, was far more successful as a poet than a painter and during the 1860's, "became one of the most popular Victorian poets."¹⁸ Many of his followers, even if they were not poets, playwrights or authors of books, still wrote and published prefaces, lectures, forewords, etc. and maintained a relationship with the theatre and literary arts. MacDonald and other members of the Group had a close working relationship with the theatrical productions at the Arts and Letters Club and Hart House and, of course, there were theatrical elements in MacDonald's 1916 Simpson store decoration.

The genius of the American poet, Walt Whitman (1819-1892), was recognized in England by the Pre-Raphaelite group long before American critics acknowledged his work. Whitman, apprenticed and trained in the craft of printing, and self-taught as a house builder, was also particularly relevant to the artists and craftsmen of the Arts and Crafts Movement. His demand for individual creative autonomy, free

from historicism, was epitomised in the unusual meters and colloquial language of the poetry in Leaves of Grass.¹⁹

Edward Carpenter (1844-1929), a friend of both Morris and Charles Robert Ashbee (1863-1942), was so inspired by Whitman that he visited him in America,²⁰ as did Oscar Wilde (1854-1900),²¹ both men becoming Whitman's friends.

Whitman's controversial preface to the first edition of Leaves of Grass defines the first principles of a poet/craftsman in modern society, the poet seen as a supernatural designer for the whole world, in whose "proper expression of beauty there is precision and balance" and in which "nothing is better than simplicity."²² There is a strong relationship between Whitman's poetic principles and the design principles isolated by Pugin and Ruskin, enumerated by Jones and adopted by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

"All of the Group knew and read works such as Whitman's Leaves of Grass²³ and MacDonald stated, in the introduction to a lecture²⁴ on Whitman he gave at the Toronto Reference Library in Fall of 1926, "I fell under the influence of W. as a young man and it has remained with me." MacDonald quoted extensively from Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) in his lecture to reinforce what MacDonald stated was "an artist's view of Whitman." While one might have presumed that Whitman's prurience would be repugnant to MacDonald,

MacDonald lauds the "divinely humane"²⁵ poet, his creativity and transcendentalist vision.

Walden²⁶ by Thoreau, also an admirer of Whitman, contained philosophical and social concepts equally attractive to artists and craftsmen and "the emergent Arts and Crafts movement derived from his book a sense of priorities."²⁷ The anti-urban bias of Morris²⁸ and the Arts and Crafts Movement²⁹ was echoed in the works of Whitman, Thoreau's Walden and in the essays of Whitman's mentor, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Ashbee, a close friend of Carpenter and the founder of the famous Guild and School of Handicrafts, in 1917 used a line from Emerson's Where the Great City Stands as the title of one of his books³⁰ decrying the effects of industrialisation.

The philosophies of these writers were equally important to MacDonald and his friends. They "read the transcendental poets, like Whitman and Thoreau, who confirmed their idea that the northern landscape mirrored the national character."³¹ It is interesting to note that Morris' too was profoundly inspired by the Icelandic North and its sagas, which "helped him to find a new attitude to life."³² Morris' journals of his Northern trips are later echoed in MacDonald's similarly vivid descriptions³³ of Northern scenery while the new strength Morris found in the North,

Morris found in the North, "the worship of Courage,"³⁴ presages the later "cult of Adventure" in which MacDonald and his friends were participants, like Morris, "exhilarated by the rough self-sufficient life."³⁵

While studying under Street, Morris had become a close friend of Street's then assistants, Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912) and Philip Webb (1831-1915), and Webb had worked for Morris before and after the 1861 formation of Morris' decorating and manufacturing company.

The idea of this company, generally known as Morris & Company, grew out of ventures in applied art design the year before, in 1860, when Morris and his friends designed the furniture and decorations for the "Red House," designed for Morris by his friend Webb. Morris' company was aesthetically and financially rewarding from its formation, providing a tangible complement to Ruskin's ideals and acting as a positive example to the Arts and Crafts Movement in general. "It is undoubtedly true that all its members would have proclaimed that the example of Morris was one of the main determinant factors in their lives and choice of careers."³⁶

The 1896 Canadian Guild of Civic Art followed Morris' example in its interest in the preservation of existing buildings, and the erection and decoration of new ones, thus

stressing a relationship between Architecture and Applied Art. Such a relationship had been the basis of another highly specialized art group founded by Reid in 1894, the Society of Mural Decorators. In 1896 this new group, allied with the Guild, tried to persuade the Toronto civic authorities to include mural decorations in the new City Hall then under construction. Their efforts were unsuccessful, even though Reid himself donated a mural at no cost. However, Reid's pioneering efforts in this area were successful some time later, and led to commissions and competitions like that instituted by the Royal Canadian Academy in 1923 won by MacDonald's A Friendly Meeting, Early Canada. Varley took second place in this first competition and, in 1925, Reid was himself a finalist.

In 1902 Reid had used his executive position in the Ontario Society of Artists to strengthen Canadian applied arts by having the Society sponsor Canada's first Exhibition of Applied Art. MacDonald's "catalogue covers showing the influence of William Morris's [sic] designs were included"³⁷ in this exhibition. The success of this and succeeding exhibitions, in which studios like Grip Limited participated, resulted in a group of artists, led by Reid, founding in 1903 the Canadian Society of Applied Arts. This Society, which later changed its name to the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, was dedicated to "the encouragement of

original design and original expression according to the example of William Morris, whether in crafts, furniture or posters."³⁸ The society was, in ideas, closely related to its English predecessor, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society formed in 1888 and its American counterpart, the New York Guild of Arts and Crafts formed in 1900.

Arts and Crafts concepts were adopted also in the personal lives of Canadian adherents. In 1891, the water-colourist Marmaduke Matthews (1837-1913) "developed his farm as a co-operative artists' community"³⁹ and Reid was among the artists who joined it.

In 1902, MacDonald joined the Toronto Art Students' League, and became friends with and was greatly influenced by its then President, Robert Holmes (1861-1930), a student of painting at the Royal College of Art in London under Gerald Moira (1867-1959), who was often featured in The Studio, and was a member of the Art Workers' Guild.⁴⁰ Holmes, "was a diligent student of the work of William Morris and Walter Crane, and his enthusiasm for these artists rubbed off on his younger colleague."⁴¹

Members of the English Arts and Crafts movement and its affiliates also travelled abroad. In 1881, Morris & Co. had opened the first of their American showrooms in New York, the same year that Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), influenced

by Morris, reorganized his company on the lines of Morris & Co. In 1882 Oscar Wilde completed a North American lecture tour of the United States and Canada, using many of Morris' ideas. "In America, Wilde tried to don the mantle of Ruskin and Morris by promulgating their philosophy of decorative art while rejecting their high seriousness in dealing with the public."⁴²

In 1891 the first American edition of a work by Morris was issued by the publishers, Roberts Brothers of Boston. This limited edition was a facsimile of the English first edition, in 1891, of The Story of the Glittering Plain, the first of a total of fifty-two books printed at Kelmscott. Although some reviews of this book's Kelmscott style were critical, a year after it was published, Kelmscott books were so eagerly sought by collectors that they were "sold out long in advance of issue and the prices double[d], treble[d], and even quadruple[d] within a few months".⁴³

In 1894, Elbert Hubbard, (1856-1915) an American entrepreneur with an interest in fine printing, visited Morris in England and, inspired by him, began publishing in America a very successful series of periodicals in a cheap version of the Kelmscott style. The following year, a publisher wishing to take advantage of the demand for Kelmscott books approached Morris in England and arranged

for him to publish Rossetti's Hand and Soul in America.

The book was published at the end of the year and did much to publicise the Kelmscott Press, its style and the concepts it embodied. Rossetti's book had appeal only to a small public, for Kelmscott books were as expensive as the applied art of Morris & Co. Hubbard had, however, on his return to America, established his Roycroft Printing Shop. Its first book, The Song of Songs, was published the same year as Hand and Soul, followed by a yearly succession until 1938 of books in the Kelmscott style which sold for between one and two dollars each.

In addition to his adherence to the Kelmscott ideals of book production, Hubbard followed the social ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement. With the Roycroft Printing Press at its centre, a whole community of Roycrofters was built up, living in a model rural community in East Aurora, New York, working under model conditions and producing hand-crafted objects in natural materials.

Roycroft was at the head of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, including the so-called Mission style of furnishings, popular at the turn of the century. Roycroft was, in other words, a bridge between the English Arts and Crafts, itself stemming from Morris & Company, and the most widespread American style in the years just before World War I.⁴⁴

Of course, in addition to such direct and indirect sources for the influences of Morris and the Arts and Crafts

Movement, The Studio was of paramount importance as an artistic source [and was] "an ideal platform for the promulgation of both Art Nouveau style, and Arts and Crafts ideology."⁴⁵

In 1902 MacDonald had exhibited work showing the influence of William Morris at the Ontario Society of Artists Applied Art Exhibition "and he sent a sample book design to a well-known follower of William Morris in the U.S."⁴⁶ That this "well-known follower" was Elbert Hubbard is confirmed by a drawing in an early sketchbook, dated March 1900 to May 1904. This drawing,

identified as "October 29, 1900, East Aurora," was done when he took his wife to visit the Shop of the Roycrofters at East Aurora, New York State. At this time MacDonald was giving serious thought to joining this private press shop.⁴⁷

It is clear that MacDonald, whose areas of specialization in later years became typography and book design, was already in 1900 interested in these areas. Only three years later, from 1903 until 1907, at Carlton Studio, "he did mainly book design and had an intense interest in the private press,"⁴⁸ so a private press shop in the same style he himself practised, would have been particularly attractive.

The communal life of the Roycrofters would also have appealed to MacDonald, for he consistently demonstrated an Arts and Crafts preference, wherever possible, to work as a

member of a group rather than as an individual, whether at Grip Limited, at the Studio Building or in organizing the St. Anne's Anglican church commission.

His attitudes towards commercial art and fine art are very clearly defined by MacDonald in his essay in Trails to Success,⁴⁹ a book of essays contributed by successful professionals and intended as an aid to students in their choice of a career. He stated the two main divisions in art to be "the Fine Arts, and Applied or Industrial Art," and went on to rather bitterly remark (in 1931) that "there is little demand for Fine Art, so called, in Canada."⁵⁰ Discussing the two main divisions further, he stated that their "names do not necessarily imply higher and lower quality" but contradicts this statement when he goes on to advise that while engaged in Applied art, the artist "must so husband his time, energy and enthusiasm that he will have enough left of all these to give expression to his higher ideals."⁵¹

Despite their own affiliations with commercial art, the other members of the Group seem to have shared MacDonald's ambivalence towards it, demonstrated in their attitude towards Carmichael and Casson, both of whom

worked full-time to support families, and this also set them apart from the rest of the Group, who had little sympathy for commercial artists. It was considered acceptable to be an art teacher, but there

was still a stigma attached to working in the commercial field.⁵²

MacDonald first started teaching part-time, for The Shaw Correspondence School, in 1909, and for the Ontario Department of Education in 1917. In 1921 he accepted a full-time position at the Ontario College of Art but one year later, in a letter to Joan MacDonald from Nova Scotia, he wrote "I loathe school and the thoughts of teaching."⁵³ He would, however, continue to teach until he died in 1932.

Starting in the summer of 1912 and continuing until his death, MacDonald regularly designed and executed the Canadian National Exhibition displays but, in 1912, he wrote to his wife complaining that he was "frequently almost tired out and weary of the job."⁵⁴

In fact, the only true delight MacDonald showed in a commercial commission was in his long letter to Lismer⁵⁵ describing his 1916 Simpson's store display. The project's requirement of craftsmanship in a variety of media together with the free use of colour pleased MacDonald and he enjoyed cutting out the wooden puppets and stringing them, designing and building a working windmill and getting the waterfall to work. His regrets on completion of his most important work, the St. Anne's Church commission, were clearly stated in his article in the R.A.I.C. Journal, where he wrote that he

considered the time and money available had been inadequate.⁵⁶

MacDonald jotted down notations of the colours of much of what he saw, whether of a balsam pine frond, (Plate 34) a bird or a painting, seemingly interested in the effects of one colour upon another and the mood they produced. The richness of his palette and the brilliant colours he used in commissions which required colour, like the the MacCallum murals (Plates 15, 16, 17) demonstrate his talents as a lyrical colourist even though the greater part of his working life was spent on black and white depictions.

The same textural effects exist in both his Applied and Fine Art, while in his linocut Beaver Pond, Algoma (Plate 35) "the broken brush stroke of his painting, often described as a 'tapestry' effect, is conveyed in the print by the broken surface, where the white forms flicker against the black inked areas."⁵⁷ In his lettering and text designs, MacDonald sought this same all-over "tapestry" effect, using fleuron fillers to maintain an overall texture, as in the Thomson plaque. (Plate 36) MacDonald's first biographer noted in 1940 that the 1919 Wild River (Plate 23) shows "the tapestry-like quality which was the overemphasis [sic] of design."⁵⁸

MacDonald consistently used the same design basis and

method of work irrespective of whether the medium was Applied or Fine Art. Related subject matter in both media demonstrates a singleness of vision and design in his work, exemplified by the identical subject matter of the 1920 linocut Beaver Pond, Algoma (Plate 35) and the 1919 oils The Beaver Dam (Plate 36), Beaver Dam and Birches (Plate 37) and Beaver Pond, Algoma, (Plate 38) as does also the identical subject of the drawing A Breezy Shore (Plate 25) and the oil Windy Day, Turtle Lake. (Plate 39)

MacDonald's repetition of forms and techniques in his Applied Art is demonstrated in his Fine Art, as in the use of broken brushwork and recurring forms in three 1921 oils, The Solemn Land, (Plate 40) Autumn in Algoma (Plate 41) and Forest Wilderness. (Plate 42)

Criticism of MacDonald's Fine Art, however, was never based on its relationship to his Applied Art and objections to it were invariably based on the two dimensionality of his oils and their relationships to posters. Such criticism is consistently made by Hunter, who astutely noted MacDonald's early difficulty with large canvases when he wrote that, in Falls on the Montreal River (Plate 43) MacDonald "had managed to paint a large canvas without resorting to flat design."⁵⁹ Equally astute was his observation that MacDonald used colour "to break up surfaces" though he did not follow this to its full conclusion which is, of course,

that MacDonald's paintings, devoid of colour, differ little from his commercial work and that any additional dimension is gained by the use of colour. The ambiguities in the unsuccessful title page for Legends of Vancouver⁶⁰ (Plate 44) for instance, would have been resolved by the use of colour, particularly if it were applied with a broken brushstroke or "tapestry" effect.

The texture of a printed page, after all, is itself a "tapestry," to be read from left to right, its designer modifying the warp and weft of its horizontals and verticals by spacing and the refinement of the lettering, from heavy and thick, or attenuated to a thread-like line. Thus, although MacDonald's "tapestry" textural effects in his painting, particularly in his 1916 The Tangled Garden (Plate 19) have consistently been attributed to Scandinavian sources, "in view of MacDonald's own familiarity with and competence in the Morris tradition, it is possible that The Tangled Garden derives entirely from that source without any direct reference to Scandinavian tapestries."⁶¹

MacDonald's espousal of Arts and Crafts concepts also lacked direct reference to or understanding of their true sources, the Middle Ages, Pugin and Ruskin. He emulated Morris' contemporary style and, whenever possible, adopted the methods by which Morris so successfully to put into

practice the theories of his predecessors. However, Morris was motivated by a genuine concern for those less fortunate than himself, never apparent in MacDonald, while MacDonald's conviction, in effect, that Fine and Applied Art were mutually exclusive betrays a shallow understanding, at best, of the ideals with which he identified. Perhaps, too, MacDonald's perceptions were blurred by the pervasive bitterness of his discontent.

I have a manger in my soul,
Where groping longings champ and pull;
And in the heedless town without
The glittering inns are full.⁶²

NOTES

CHAPTER II

Theoretical influences on the work of J.E.H. MacDonald in all media

1 Lionel Lambourne, Utopian Craftsmen: The Arts and Crafts Movement from the Cotswolds to Chicago (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1980) p. 12.

2 A.W.N. Pugin, Contrasts, or A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day; shewing [sic] the Present Decay of Taste (1841 rpt; Leicester: Leicester Univ. Press, 1969)

3 -----, The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture: set forth in Two Lectures delivered at St. Marie's, Oscott (London: John Weale, 1841)

4 Ruari McLean, Victorian Book Design and Colour Printing (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1972) p. 116.

5 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. III, Lectures and Notes, "Design, O.C.A. Teachers [sic] Summer Course," July (19)22, July (19)24, p. 1.

6 ibid. p. 2.

7 Owen Jones, The Grammar of Ornament (London: Day & Son, 1856)

8 Lambourne, p. 7.

9 Gillian Naylor, The Arts and Crafts Movement: a study of its sources, ideals and influence on design theory (1971 rpt; London: Studio Vista, 1980) p. 13.

10 Lambourne, p. 15.

11 John Ruskin, The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849 rpt; London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1959)

12 Joan Abse, John Ruskin: The Passionate Moralist (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981) p. 225.

13 Abse, p. 232.

14 E.R. Hunter, J.E.H. MacDonald: A Biography & Catalogue of his Work (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1940) p. 3.

15 Duval, p. 18.

16 Barry Lord, The History of Painting in Canada: Towards a People's Art (Toronto: NC Press, 1974) p. 118.

17 Naylor, p. 104.

18 Paul Thompson, The Work of William Morris (1967 rpt; London: Quartet Books, 1977) p. 182.

19 Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass (Brooklyn, New York: Rome Brothers, 1855)

20 Lambourne, p. 124.

21 Charles E. Feinberg, An Exhibition of the Works of Walt Whitman: Commemorating the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Printing of his "Leaves of Grass" (Detroit: Detroit Public Library, 1955) p. 77.

22 Whitman, preface, p. vi.

23 Peter Mellen, The Group of Seven (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972) p. 220, footnote no. 56.

24 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. III: "An Artist's View of Walt Whitman" (MS), "An Artist's View of Walt Whitman" (MS) [incomplete], Notes: "Critics of Whitman" (MS) 30th October, 1926, "Notes: 'On Whitman' - Arts and Letters Club" (MS) 28th January 1927.

25 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. III: "An Artist's View of Walt Whitman," (MS), p. 5.

26 Henry David Thoreau, Walden (1854 rpt; n.p., n.n., n.d.)

27 Lambourne, p. 33.

28 Thompson, p. 71.

29 Lambourne, p. 33.

30 Lambourne, p. 33-34.

31 Mellen, p. 110.

32 Thompson, p. 34.

33 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. I: "Notebooks: Diary August and September, 1925, Diary September 1926-1926, Diary September, 1928, Diary August and September, 1930, Diary September, 1930," Vol. III: "Miscellaneous Manuscripts "A Glimpse of the West [1918]" (MS).

34 Thompson, p. 35.

35 Thompson, p. 34.

36 Lambourne, p. 32.

37 Lord, p. 119.

38 Robert Stacey, The Canadian Poster Book: 100 Years of the Poster in Canada (Agincourt: Methuen Publications, n.d.) intro., p. x.

39 Dennis Reid, A Concise History of Canadian Painting (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973) p. 71.

40 Naylor, p. 145.

41 Duval, p. 17.

42 Kevin O'Brien, Oscar Wilde in Canada: An Apostle for the Arts (Toronto: Personal Library Publishers, 1982) pp. 26-27.

43 Susan Otis Thompson, American Book Design and William Morris (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1977) p. 30.

44 Otis Thompson, p. 171.

45 Lambourne, p. 104.

46 Lord, p. 119.

47 Hunter Bishop, introd., J.E.H. MacDonald Sketchbook, 1915-1922 (Moonbeam, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 1979) p. i.

48 Patricia Ainslie, Images of the Land: Canadian Block Prints 1919-1945 (Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1984)

p. 48.

49 John Henderson and Alfred H. Allen, eds., Trails to Success (Toronto: MacMillan, 1931)

50 *Ibid*, p. 96.

51 *Ibid*, p. 96.

52 Mellen, p. 158. MacDonald's adoption of a similar attitude, illogical in view of his own commercial work, is shown in the second line of theeeventh verse of "We are Seven," referring to Frank (Franz) Johnston:

One of us went unto the 'Peg
(We were but his half-brothers)
He left his number as a leg-
Acy unto the others.

53 Duval, p. 141.

54 Duval, p. 45.

55 The McMichael Canadian Collection Archives, Kleinberg, Ontario, File "Miscellaneous." The information quoted regarding this Simpson commission is taken from a long and detailed account of it by MacDonald in an undated letter to Arthur Lismer. Although undated, its contents show that it was written soon after January, 1917.

56 J.E.H. MacDonald, "The Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church, Toronto," Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada II, (May/June 1925) p. 90.

57 Ainslie, p. 48.

58 Hunter, p. 24.

59 Hunter, p. 25.

60 E. Pauline Johnson, Legends of Vancouver, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1922.

61 Nancy E. Robertson, J.E.H. MacDonald, R.C.A., 1873-1932 (Toronto: The Art Gallery of Toronto: 1965) p. 6.

62 "J.E.H. MacDonald Papers," File No. MG 30 D III, vol. II: File "Poems N-O 1918-1932" "The Manger," n.d.

Not only far in Bethlehem,
The Christ was born that olden day;
His birth-cry comes within the heart
That opens him the way.

I have a manger in my soul,
Where groping longings champ and pull;
And in the heedless town without
The glittering inns are full.

O Mary of the holy smile,
To my warm quietness repair;
Soothe your dear child in lowliness
That I may tend him there.

CHAPTER III

The tie that binds: Poetry/Transcendentalism

The most important of J.E.H. MacDonald's beliefs was an adherence to a very personal form of Transcendentalism. His spiritual concepts so dominated MacDonald's vision that his compositions in all media echoed and gained unity from the transcendentalist form of MacDonald's concepts. A basic transcendentalist belief in ascending levels of existence, finite to infinite, is echoed in the transfixed horizontal planes of his art and in the construction of his more successful poetry.

J.E.H. MacDonald wrote poetry consistently from 1899 until the year of his death, 1932. Almost all MacDonald's poetry was unpublished and his manuscripts are housed in The Public Archives in Ottawa. Their chronological order is based on MacDonald's sequential dating of the series of notebooks in which his poems and notes were written. The hundreds of poems written during this span of over thirty years reflect succeeding European and American influences prevalent in the same period, moderated by Canadian social and economic

factors generally and MacDonald's own circumstances and beliefs in particular.

Originating in German Idealism, transcendentalism in various forms gained increasing popularity in the United States from the 1800's on, many of its exponents being disillusioned Unitarian ministers seeking new inspiration for a new age. Its basic tenets were expounded in a series of essays, based on his lectures, by its foremost American exponent, the writer and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson. His first book, Nature,¹ was published in 1836, followed by a series of published Essays,² of which the most famous and influential were Self-Reliance and Experience.

The practical application of Emerson's pantheistic philosophy encouraged personal self-reliance, acquired by a trust in one's instincts, tempered, but not ruled by the past. He felt that man should be non-materialistic, appreciative of the simple joys of life and nature and should aspire in life to match the powers of nature.

On the spiritual level, transcendentalists believed in the power of intuition through which the individual soul could be in contact with the "over-soul" of which it, and all other human life, was and always had been a part. In this philosophy, the spiritual world is real and the material

world is merely a illusory screen, or, as MacDonald explains in a poem, an outer covering:

These eyes can only see the husk
of all things, but in rapt surmise
Looks forth the soul, with faith of beauty
there,
Beyond all known surprise.³

An "active soul" could progress from the finite earth to cosmic consciousness, ascending upwards to superior planes of consciousness by of a combination of reasoning and spiritual powers.

Emerson resigned from his Unitarian pastorsehip in Boston in 1832 because he was unable to reconcile certain church doctrines with his own beliefs. He travelled to Europe a year afterwards and met and became a lifelong friend and correspondent of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881). His beliefs had much in common with those of a similarly disillusioned group of New England transcendental idealists with whom he became closely associated. MacDonald's knowledge of Emerson's religious stand would have made him sympathetic to Lawrence Skey, a fellow clubman and patron, who, like Emerson, wished to eliminate certain nineteenth century conventions from his church.

The early New England transcendentalists, with whom Emerson allied himself, had unsuccessfully attempted certain social experiments, related to later concepts of the Arts and

Crafts Movement, when they founded a rural community intended to be totally self sufficient. A later successful version of this attempt was Elbert Hubbard's 1895 Roycrofters community, where all profits were placed "into the common fund of The Roycrofters - the benefit is for all."⁴ Roycroft Press, which MacDonald had visited in 1900, published editions of Morris' works as well as Emerson's Compensation, in 1904, and his Nature, in 1905.

Emerson's philosophy of self-sufficiency and identification with nature was put into practice by his friend and neighbour, Henry David Thoreau. Walden, his account of his spiritual and physical survival during two years of living in accordance with transcendentalist beliefs, had great popular appeal, for it stressed that man by his own efforts could overcome the defects in his life and rise above them to a higher spiritual level. Thoreau, for whom MacDonald's son was named, was MacDonald's favourite author, but he read and quoted Emerson and Whitman, as did others in his circle.

Walt Whitman further democratized transcendentalism in his own personal version of it as a levelling force, stressing the importance of the creative soul in raising not only its own spiritual consciousness, but all mankind's from its common level. Whitman acknowledged that many of his poems dealt with religion, despite their colloquial language

and everyday subject matter.

My own feeling abt my book is that it makes (tries to make) every fellow see himself, & see that he has got to work out his salvation himself - has got to pull the oars, & hold the plow, or swing the axe himself, - & that the blessings of life are not the fictions generally supposed, but are real, & are mostly within reach of all - you chew on this.

This poet, whose plaster bust was a Roycroft best-seller, also expounded a philosophy of individualism and self-reliance supported by an active spiritual consciousness or "soul." Whitman's 1883 biographer, Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke (1837-1902), a doctor at the London, Ontario, Asylum for the Insane, became himself a convert to transcendentalist philosophy and the influence in Canada of his Cosmic Consciousness (1901) has already been noted. In 1880, Dr. Bucke invited Whitman to Canada to spend the summer in Quebec, and on Whitman's death, he was one of his literary executors.

Duval notes that MacDonald, early in his life, read unspecified works by Carlyle and Walt Whitman and, in the summer of 1923, when MacDonald was working on the St. Anne's church commission, his son Thoreau noted that his father "has been reading some letters of Emerson & Carlyle to us."⁶ MacDonald's own statements of his lifelong affection for Whitman, in his 1925 lecture on the poet, have already been noted.

The greater part of MacDonald's poetry deals with transcendentalist themes: life, death and the timelessness of cosmic consciousness. He comforts himself with his personal version of transcendentalism, gaining spiritual strength from the timeless cosmic existence to which he believes his drudgery contributes. His faith is reassured and renewed by his vision of nature.

I walked the street in an April rain;
A storm in my heart and never a song:
All joy of life outweighed by pain;
Few rights in life, but many a wrong.

I heard a robin sing in the rain;
I tuned with his melody my wrong;
I looked to life with loving again,
The storm in my heart all sunny with song.⁷

Few very early paintings by MacDonald are known to exist except for some very early watercolours in the Barbizon tradition, dominant in Canada in the last decades of the 19th century and up until World War I.

MacDonald's watercolour Nova Scotia, 1898 (Plate 10) would have been painted on his second visit to Nova Scotia in 1898 to stay with his erstwhile workmate at Grip Limited, Lewis Smith.⁸ It is a simple woodland scene, a grassy foreground area with a slightly diagonal slope, behind which is a heavily wooded area, dominated by three tall trees. Its subject matter, subdued colour and the simplicity of its stable composition combine to depict a moment of quiet solitude, possibly an early morning, for a pink-tinged mist envelopes the scene behind the tall trees.

The first two stanzas of "A Snowflake", a poem of 1900, convey a similar mood, and describe a similar scene, probably in High Park, Toronto, in the winter.

The morning sun is shining
Through golden threads of mist;
Weaving the snow with shadows
Of palest amethyst.

The high and quiet tree tops
Deep calm lift over all;
And in the radiant silence
The snowflakes twinkling fall.⁹

In the other stanzas of the poem, MacDonald's thoughts, as he considers a snowflake fallen upon his sleeve, echo the calm of the woodland scene he described. The construction of the poem is a simple one, and its gentle rhythm and repetitive use of sibilant sounds, words beginning with "s," (shining, shadows, silence, snowflakes, skyfields, shed, star, sacred, sparkle, swings) in every verse but the last, gives that last verse, MacDonald's personal statement, added force. He repeated this method of construction of a poem with increasing sophistication in the integration of abstract and concrete images and their symbolism. In his watercolour MacDonald merely depicted a scene and evoked a mood, while, in "A Snowflake" he is able to depict a scene and its mood as a vehicle for an affirmation of his spiritual belief. "Indeed," notes Russell Harper, "the poetic overtones which are evident in his painting are like echoes of his literary interests, a quality not found in any of his associates'

canvases."¹⁰ Harper also sees MacDonald's "literary interests" as influencing his painting.

MacDonald's earliest known artistic work is an untitled and undated brush and ink drawing (Plate 45) dated circa. 1896, when MacDonald was 23 years old. Despite its immaturity, this sketch has a certain enigmatic narrative interest derived, not so much from its meagre content, but from its viewer's need to give it meaning. A bowed female figure, in what might be construed as widow's weeds, is opening a gate in a picket fence which encloses some predominantly vertical silhouetted shapes of varying size which vaguely connote a graveyard, below which trees cover a slope tapering down to what might be a lakeshore. The centralized figure in this early drawing forms a dark vertical against the diagonal of the white fence, her head silhouetted against the faint horizontals of a distant shore.

The reading of an early undated poem, "Cemetery Hill"¹¹ and its stressed rhythmic variations of the line "And along the ridge the high monuments are still against cloud and lashing tree" immediately affirms the viewer's deductions with regard to the subject of MacDonald's drawing and indeed adds to them. The lake, "clear green among flying clouds," is the source of the "beating wind" before which the trees "lean and strain" and "the sere grasses of earth toss and shiver." In this poem, a series of interlocking

contrasts, (between high and low, wet and dry, earth and air, movement and rigidity) and rhythmic patterns convey such transcendental notions as the transitory nature of life and its forces in relation to the immutability of death. One has to rise above the land, to the calm of the "high mountains" to be free from the "noise and movement" of the lower level where the only joyful image is merely a reflection from above.

In the earliest dated poem by MacDonald, "The Worker"¹² of 1899, Macdonald paints with words a genre scene, addressing a

Little grimy-golden child,
Sitting by your mother's door;
Sweeping with a brush the sand
As you see her sweep the floor:

In his third stanza, MacDonald tells the child that she seems to him to be a "symbol of our human life" in her concentration upon her sweeping of the sand, just as "mankind from age to age" has smoothed the earth. He wishes that he could believe that the perfection sought by the child was indeed attainable and envies her happy dedication to her self-appointed task.

In his imagery, MacDonald again makes use of stressed related rhythmic lines and a crescendo of contrasts, grimy-golden, old/young, large/little, concrete/abstract, and natural/supernatural, to build to and strengthen his stated belief in the endurance of the human soul's unconscious

striving for perfection. In this poem, hard, sharp "sticks" appropriately symbolize "trouble" and their heaviness makes "stones" an appropriate analogy for "care." MacDonald's personal statement unites the two levels of activity, physical and abstract, by identifying with both.

The subject matter of MacDonald's untitled sketch of 1896 and of his poem "The Worker" of 1899 is representative of a contemporary taste for narrative and descriptive genre which had reached its zenith in Canada at the turn of the century in the works of MacDonald's teacher, George Reid. Even in this often superficial vehicle of genre, MacDonald makes declarations of his personal transcendentalist beliefs. The young MacDonald handled words with more proficiency than he did his brush and pen, however, for his sketch is mediocre in execution and its content inconclusive, lacking the rhythmic cohesion of "Cemetery Hill." It might reasonably be presumed that the drawing was made to complement the already completed poem.

It was not until 1907, after his return from England and his abandonment of small formats and of the careful techniques of watercolour, that MacDonald began painting large oils. This freer and more expressive medium enabled him to duplicate the repetitive pattern and rhythmic effects of his poetry. The oil painting Wind, Rain and Sunshine, (Plate 1) of 1910, the culmination of MacDonald's formative

period, depicts a pastoral scene of a farmer, with threatening storm clouds. MacDonald catches the mood of an impending violent storm and the painting achieves its emotional intensity from a contrast between the repetitive upward movements of the undulating, shredded storm clouds and the static flat or rounded horizontals of the richly patterned earth and its treeline. Small patches of brilliant static colour heighten and give a third dimension to the rolling sky beneath which the farmer and his horsedrawn plough are insignificant.

The visual imagery of two descriptive verses of MacDonald's undated poem, "Spring Evening - Wartime",¹³ relate particularly to Wind, Rain and Sunshine (Plate 1) of 1910. As in the painting,

The troubled sky is hung with grey,
In thickened roll and drooping fold.

Under this sky's "livid spaces," an old man's horses dream at the end of a day's Spring ploughing, while:

The old man lays the burnished plough,
On the green headland till the dawn.

In his poem, MacDonald shows that the impending violence of the war is a greater threat than natural forces, and one understands that the farmer is an old man, forced to work from dawn to dusk to replace his two sons, one abroad and one wounded. Trees are "ranked" like soldiers and each of the poem's four stanzas is a description which includes

the colours of the landscape, purple, grey-green, and green, in contrast to the livid spaces in the clouds in which an aeroplane, symbol of the war, is flying.

Until 1910, the locales of MacDonald's few known landscape oils were High Park, the Humber River valley and other areas close to Toronto. His early poems, mostly undated, have a similar setting and, in many instances, their descriptive passages can be matched to passages in paintings. Lines from the undated "Still Evening"¹⁴

We stood to look on valley slopes,
Where broken snows lay grey and cold
And round our feet the setting sun,
Threw leaf and weed in gold.

exactly parallel the form and content, for example, of MacDonald's impressionist Morning Shadows (Plate 46) of 1912, depicting figures looking down into a valley from the crest of a hill, its broken, greyed snow patterned gold by the sun's rays, as are the leaves of the trees. Similarly, the final stanzas of the undated poem "The Night Sky"¹⁵

Next morn he passed on the snowy road,
And looked with faith where the writing
showed

Gold with the blessing the glad sun threw
It's [sic] furrow filled with heavenly blue.

depict the content and colour of Morning after Snow, High Park, (Plate 47) of 1912, showing a narrow furrow made by one person's footprints up a snowy hill, the early sun shining through a frieze of trees to gild the edges of the furrow gold and shadow its depression cerulean blue.

In 1912, Spring Breezes, High Park (Plate 48) was the title of a painting, with small generalized figures walking in a pastoral scene which relates to an undated early poem, "Evening in Spring,"¹⁶ with its first line:

He sees the couples in the park,
This fair May evening, slowly walking

There is very little description in this poem, which is primarily concerned with a progression of transitory emotions in the viewer, irritation, cynicism and envy, as he sees courting couples in the park. Very little is known of MacDonald's marriage or personal life but an unhappiness, approaching at times despair, is apparent in his poems, from which his relief invariably is his transcendentalism. "Shoulder your duds" is a Whitmanesque phrase he wrote to himself as encouragement to greater physical and spiritual effort. In this poem, though he talks of "the curse enfolded in the kiss" shared by the lovers, he still longs "to be the same as they."

Tracks and Traffic, (Plate 2) painted by Macdonald in the winter of the same year, depicted a Toronto railway yard in a style "echoing French Impressionism"¹⁷, and a number of immediately preceding works had increasingly demonstrated the same impressionist tendencies.

While its title, "To Spring," and its High Park subject matter relate it to a number of paintings with similar content, this undated poem also demonstrates the influence of

impressionism. It gives a fleeting impression of a psychological state rather than a description of a physical environment and an event in it to which MacDonald responds. Such a transitory subject matter parallels the impressionism of MacDonal's Tracks and Traffic (Plate 2) and the increasingly impressionist pantings preceding it. Similar relationships can be seen between the 1912 Early Evening, Winter (Plate 49) and the undated early poem "Soul and Body"¹⁸ with its first line:

Moonlight is sleeping.

These poems were also concerned with transitory emotional states rather than the picturesque genre or descriptive pastorals of MacDonald's earliest poems.

The works of the summer of 1912 were all based on the Georgian Bay area with only two Toronto based oils painted later in the year, Toronto Harbour with Ferry (Plate 51) in the Fall and his Winter Sketch of Toronto Junction, West Toronto. (Plate 52)

It is interesting to note a similarity of composition in the latter 1912 painting and MacDonald's 1896 ink drawing (Plate 45) for, though more sophisticated than the early work, Winter Sketch (Plate 52) is still based on the diagonal of a fence, with a stressed vertical in front of it.

The images contained in MacDonald's painting Winter Sketch, (Plate 52) of a series of snow-covered houses and their fenced back yards set in a rural wooded area, are echoed in the first lines of the undated poem "Back Yards."¹⁹

Snow gardens,
Roofs all white,
A grey-white sky.
Fences all topped with snow
White door-steps,
Tufted trees, and washing white
Swayed in the windy flow.

These lines read like one of the notations accompanying the pencilled sketches that fill MacDonald's notebooks. The abruptness of these short lines and the linearity of the city-related forms depicted are in marked contrast to the long flowing lines that follow and their description of a progression of northern landscapes and their increasingly wild inhabitants. After MacDonald moved to Thornhill in 1913, his work "alternated between compositions which are static (as in the late Rocky Mountain landscapes) and those with recurring movement, poetical in feeling."²⁰ The contrasting styles in "Back Yards" demonstrate in MacDonald's poetry a duality of style similar to that noted in his paintings.

The painting's content, a rural area of the City of Toronto, unites landscape and cityscape. After 1912, MacDonald's paintings were exclusively of landscape, their subject matter further and further removed from urban

centres. The progression of northern landscapes in the poem "Back Yards" parallels MacDonald's own geographic movement towards the North for his subject matter and accords with Reid's analysis of the second period, 1910-1913, in the history of the Group of Seven.

The first stanza of "Back Yards" is a purely descriptive, disparate listing, which is given visual and poetic unity by the lines following it:

And everywhere
From street to farm,
From farm to bush,
From bush to wild
The all-uniting snow.

The second stanza commences with the line "Northward it draws a dream" and proceeds to lyrically describe that "dream" as its rhythms move geographically ever further North, from Ungava, over the "snowpaths" of "prisoned day" to the "darkened blue of Arctic wastes...," documenting the widened scope of the Group of Seven's progression north in search of subject matter. MacDonald's imagery encompasses time as well as space so that this poem also has transcendentalist overtones.

An anti-urban bias in the subject matter of MacDonald's painting was echoed in his poetry. In "Youth and the Night" there is a reference to "The jarring city" and in "Streets of Gold"²¹ MacDonald refers to "The hot and clashing

thoroughfare." In his undated poem "Vacant Lots"²² MacDonald merely states "The city quarrels with the stars" and the poem's even rhythms and gentle language negate any sense of outrage that MacDonald intended to express. His greatest inditement of an urban centre and its encroachments is in the undated poem "Improvements"²³

Here the volcanic city belches a flow of
ashes and refuse,
No more can the orchard blossom and fruit;
The city flows over the hill
Its ashes pour out to fill the old hollows,
The trees are buried in rubbish
And the heedless feet of progress tramp down
the blossoming boughs.

The Group's advancement was halted by the outbreak of World War I, for the duration of which most members of the Group were dispersed. MacDonald remained in Toronto, and among the war posters he designed, the iconography of one, Belgium (Plate 14) of 1915 is closely related to the imagery of a somewhat jingoistic wartime poem, "The Passing of Zeppelin."²⁴ In the poster, "Belgium" surveys her ravaged land, overshadowed by a disproportionately large black bird of prey which in the poem has been vanquished. MacDonald synthesises this bird of prey with the German flying machine, the Zeppelin, so that "Down falls the vulture, lifeless wings at rest," after having chosen "a demon brood to bring, dropping a blighting excrement of woe."

Tangled Garden (Plate 19) of 1916, like Belgium, (Plate 14) illustrated Art Nouveau influences in its form and

content, and its meaning is amplified by related poems. In this painting, the subject sunflower is not the radiant, virile motif of the aesthetic movement, but an old, dead sunflower with bowed head and withered leaves against a background of verdant growth. In MacDonald's transcendentalist poem, "An Ode at Graveyard Corners",²⁵ a sunflower, as in the painting, is "old" and "withered" from having that summer "stood in tall and bended prayer" in order to "build the pathway of the soul to light." MacDonald continues:

Nor green nor golden
Grandly he shows;
His leaf and flower
Are clinging snows.

Traditionally, the sunflower, symbolising the sun, represented loyalty or devotion and was a widely used Arts and Crafts motif. The explanation for the sunflower having been left standing until winter is given in another poem, "November Garden"²⁶, in which MacDonald exhorts:

But leave the sunflower bending there
Winter's bloom to catch and hold.

Further understanding of MacDonald's symbolism is available in another poem, "Old David",²⁷ an old man in his last years of life, "done with budding springs," with

His years around him like the leaves
And dropping with the level sun.

After the war, MacDonald and his friends resumed their "Algonquin" based landscapes and their consolidation of the

advances made prior to the war, which led in 1920 to the formation and first exhibition of the Group of Seven.

Their broadening vision was paralleled by a further geographic expansion when in 1921 they abandoned the Algonquin region and began painting the grandeur of the Rockies. MacDonald wrote many poems on the long train journeys West to the mountains, typified by On a Prairie Train,²⁸ of 1930. This poem consolidates in its imagery MacDonald's design devices for both fine and applied art, strong contrasts of light and dark

The shining handle of the brake,
Against the blackness of the night,
patterned areas of brilliant colour;

A lit garage with gaudy show
and a stressed vertical;

Two stately signal lights...
with symbolic significance;

.....that left
A far-seen blessing of our flight.

The stressed vertical form most used by MacDonald and other Group of Seven members was that of a tree and the transcendental significance of the pine tree, depicted by him so often, is explained by MacDonald in his poem "Quick Sketch"²⁹ of 1929. "Where spirit turns to look," he says, in the transcendental sense of stripping away material illusion, then the pine

Seeming [stands] stood at Heaven's edge
Against eternal sky.

representative of faith, while in "Wind in the Pines"³⁰

MacDonald likens the pine to a human soul.

In addition to symbolic meaning and use as a design element, trees in MacDonald's poetry also form part of an abstract imagery. The relationship between the "tapestry" effects of both MacDonald's fine and applied art has already been noted. A similar descriptive "tapestry" is found in MacDonald's poetry, for in the 1916 "April Drums"³¹ MacDonald writes of "the motley weaving of the crowd and in the 1918 "February Faith"³² an abstract "tapestry" is conjured by his line "the level threads of flying sleet, thick-woven through the rearing tree."

"The weaving images that pervade Yeats' writings of the 1880's and 1890's indicate that he was taken by Morris' tapestries"³³ and indeed, in Yeats "the linear arrangement of characters in both poem and tapestries makes for a curious link between the narrative and the pictorial."³⁴ A similar "curious link" is apparent in MacDonald's work between its content, Transcendentalism, and tapestry-like structure.

"Tapestry" combines many horizontals on a vertical frame, just as the "active soul" rising through planes of experience to cosmic consciousness, is a vertical combined with horizontal planes. An example is the complicated

transcendentalist imagery, based on horizontals and verticals, of MacDonald's "The Way of the Stars":³⁵

The house is under the poplar tree
 The tower overtops the poplar tall
 The cloud floats over them far and free
 And the sweet stars are over all.

Poverty ponders a daily grief
 Care sits by wealth in the lighted hall
 The poplar scatters her blackened leaf
 And the calm stars shine over all.

So we journey the shadowy years
 Faintly hearing an upward call
 Seeing ever in doubt and tears
 The steadfast stars shine over all.

This deceptively simple poem expresses a complicated transcendentalist value system, based on related planes of ascending spiritual, physical and material values. The man-built house overshadowed by the poplar, and the poplar, fast growing as it is, is in turn dominated by the tower, one of man's tallest buildings. But even though nature's clouds cover them all, these clouds are transitory, so the only immutable presence is that of the stars. The human inhabitants of both the tower and the house, rich and poor, are care-ridden and the tree's "blackened" leaves signify it is diseased, perhaps because the clouds are a screen shutting out not only the cosmic stars but the sun also.

The pessimism of the visual imagery is increased by the use of the nouns "doubt," and "tears" and a transitory mood is stressed by use of "shadowy" and "faintly" in comparison with the stars, which are "sweet," "calm" and "steadfast." These

adjectives connote "lovingkindness," "peace" and "strength," three qualities attred to the stars by Theosophist doctrine.³⁶ For Theosophists, wearing a small silver star signid their belief in the "coming" of a "world teaer" while the star itself embodied the spiritual and the material worlds. The abstract imagery and the concrete earthly description of "The Way of the Stars" are based on horizontal planes, the lowest the earth, and the highest the stars, linked physically and metaphorically by the vertical tower from which, because it is "higher," one might more readily head the "upward call."

It is difficult to interpret the words and work of what was a most reticent man, and one cannot tell if what seem to be a covert descriptive catalogue of some of his paintings,³⁷ in a stanza of the poem "Venison,"³⁸ is intended as such, or was subconscious on his part or was even an example of his wit.

A lapping bay in moonlit hills
 A red-rock pool the rapid fills,
 The maples hung with leaves alight
 Spruces that prop the glittering night,
 A beaver dam with yellow trim
 Of floated leaves along its brim
 Bright bunch-berries om scarlet knots
 On leafage apread in purple plots,
 The rowans [sic] crimson clusters hung
 In the white torrent's foam up-flung,
 A little birch that trembles clean
 Above the misty frosted sheen
 And casts her golden leaves away
 Before the shining feet of day.

MacDonald's most successful poems are those dealing with

transcendentalist themes, in which his personal conviction of the truth gives his words added power. Certainly his transcendentalist identification with natural process and its rhythms intensified his experience of nature and its depiction. His beliefs were the basis of his life, and so permeated his work that they were a cohesive and unifying factor in it. His consistent use of cosmic symbols, especially stars, as motifs, allied with his Canadian content, are distinguishing elements in his Fine and Applied art, in the majority of which both appear.

Canadian and cosmic motifs were used by MacDonald in his designs for Bliss Carman's 1921 Later Poems³⁹ (Plates 52, 53), both equally appropriate, for Carman, like others of the Post-Confederation poets, was a transcendentalist.

Carman had acquired his transcendental beliefs from his Philosophy professor at Harvard, Josiah Royce (1855-1915), who was a disciple of Emerson. Carman's cousin, the poet and writer Charles G.D. Roberts, had also become a convert to Transcendentalism after reading Emerson.

Carman and Roberts were two of Canada's best known poets of the period after Confederation who, except for Drummond's Canadian "habitant" themes, wrote mostly landscape poetry based on the particular region of Canada each knew best. Just as "it is in landscape painting that the Canadian artists have established their claim to represent a movement

in the world's art; it is in nature poetry that the leading Canadian poets have produced their best loved work."⁴⁰

The regionalism of both poets and artists is hardly surprising, for until the 1882 publication of Picturesque Canada, to which the poet Roberts had been a contributor, few Canadians had been aware of the vast and varied beauty of their country. In 1902, a Canadian edition of Roberts' A History of Canada was published, in which he stated that Canada "has reached but lately" the stage in her development which would produce literature and art, "the choice fruits of civilization."⁴¹ Roberts attributed a lag in the development of literature and art to lack of public interest and support rather than a deficiency in Canadian poets and artists.⁴²

Woodcock's introduction to Canadian Writers and their Works poses a relationship between the Confederation poets and "their counterparts in painting, the Group of Seven," in their collective individuality. Banding together gave the poets "a kind of combined force to their example, similar to that of the Group of Seven in painting."⁴³ He also notes the two groups' responsiveness to contemporary English tendencies rather than to Canadian precedents.

The tendencies affecting the writing arts in colonial Canada at the turn of the century reflected the English

development of historic literary styles. English academic influences and usage were adhered to by predominantly English staff in Canadian universities and represented a form of academic colonialism.

Commencing in 1892, Campbell, Lampman, and Scott were the joint editors of a weekly literary column, At the Mermaid Inn in the Globe and Mail in which for nearly two years they castigated the materialism of their contemporaries and advocated the stimulation of a national consciousness. One of the first issues addressed in this literary column was the European domination of Canadian universities when Campbell questioned how many "truly Canadians in birth, hope, sympathy, and education"⁴⁴ there were at Canadian universities.

The English romanticism imported by English academics was frequently aligned in Canadian writing with the mystical but disciplined transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau or the less disciplined transcendentalism of their disciple, Whitman, who added to it his highly individual forms of democratisation and social idealism. "World-views that avoided dialectic, of a theosophical or transcendentalist cast, became popular among the Canadian poets of that time, Roberts and Carman particularly, and later among painters, as the reminiscences of the Group of Seven made clear."⁴⁵

The American influence, however, was on content rather than form, Emerson's transcendental philosophy coupled with Thoreau's "loving observation and depiction of nature" while "Whitman's hardy pantheistic creed, his joy in nature and sense of identification with her, his quality of 'cosmic consciousness,' are fundamental in the Canadian poetic outlook."⁴⁶

Whitman's influence on MacDonald was one of content rather than form and despite his great admiration of Whitman, MacDonald did not adopt Whitman's democratisation of poetry by the use of everyday language. Instead, MacDonald consistently used "poetic" language: "sere" instead of dry in his early "Cemetery Hill" and in the later "The Way of the Stars" the tower "oertops the poplar. MacDonald's lecture on the American poet⁴⁷ was an artist's view of Whitman, and he "painted" with words a view of Whitman as a great mountain, dominating all other peaks from wherever viewed. It is clear from the lecture notes that MacDonald's lecture (to The English Association) had no learned literary basis whatsoever, but was based on a shared transcendental philosophy and MacDonald's admiration of Whitman's rugged adherence to its principles. Understandably, MacDonald "was attacked by a learned member of the audience."

What MacDonald did stress was Whitman's conviction that the poetic intent, however achieved, is paramount and that

the reader should be so convinced of the intent that he, not the poet, follows it to its conclusion. Words are tools to achieve a purpose and the poet seizes the most appropriate for his purpose, just as in the Arts and Crafts movement, any medium in fine or applied art could express artistic intent. As with his pencilled or oil sketches, MacDonald's first draft of a poem makes clear his direct intent but, unlike his work in art, his subsequent re-working, elevating of its language, polishing of syntax and rhythm, often deadens his original sharp perception. MacDonald's working of his poetry is an additive process, while in his applied and fine art it is a reductive one. There is no consistent theme or locale in MacDonald's poetry and its only unifying factor is the transcendentalist philosophy which unifies otherwise unrelated content and the form of its presentation.

In a discussion of the Confederation poets, George Woodcock states that "the poems we value most are those which reflect their response, not to Canada as a nation, but the local and particular characteristics of the Canadian land." He goes on to say that while it would be simplistic to class these poets as merely "landscape poets," "the fact is that the landscapes which they knew and experienced played a part in most of their best poetry,"⁴⁸ just as the wild Northern regions MacDonald and the Group of Seven progressively sought out and experienced epitomised their ideals and style. This

consistent and expanding Canadian theme in MacDonald's paintings is lacking in his poetry.

In his introduction to Creative Writing in Canada, Desmond Pacey states that

There is a family resemblance between the paintings of Tom Thomson and Emily Carr, the poems of Duncan Campbell Scott and E.J. Pratt and Earle Birney, and the novels of Grove and de la Roche and Callaghan: in all of them man is dwarfed by an immensely powerful physical environment which is at once forbidding and fascinating.

In a discussion of the pre-emptive importance of the Canadian climate and landscape in giving Canadian literature a distinctive form and flavour, Pacey goes on to say:

It is interesting to observe that the English and French critics, when the paintings of the Group of Seven were first exhibited in London and Paris in the nineteen twenties, compared them to the work of Scandinavian and Russian painters, and that English reviewers of the early novels of Mazo de la Roche and Frederick Phillip Grove detected in them a quality which they could best describe as Russian.

"In all cases," Pacey continues, "the comparison was apt, not because there was an appreciable or direct Russian or Scandinavian influence on the Canadian work, but because it was the product of a similar geography."⁵⁰

In a discussion of the beginnings of a Canadian poetic tradition in his Harsh and Lonely Land, Marshall relates a specific poetic vision to a specific artistic one when he states that a passage by Isabella Valancy Crawford "brings to

life, as in an Emily Carr painting with its flow and rhythm, the primitive vision of an animistic world."⁵¹ Similarly, Pacey states that the poet Charles G.D. Roberts

has the painter's eye, the eye that not merely sees the colour and texture and shape of things but which arranges them into broad patterns, perceives their conformations and their rhythmic interplay of line and plane.⁵²

The painterly qualities of the Confederation poets in the depiction of their Canadian subject matter was recognized by the innovative group of artists forming The Toronto Art Students League, who also had ideals of Canadian nationalism.

In 1891, the Ontario Society of Artists published an illustrated Catalogue of their annual exhibition, with lithographed drawings and sketches by its members, many of whom were also members of The Toronto Art Students League. The following year, perhaps influenced by the example of this catalogue, the League issued the first of its famous calendars. In succeeding years, in order to achieve some unity in the calendar decorations, "the idea of a special theme for each year was gradually evolved."⁵³ In 1895 "from the poems of Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, Charles G.D. Roberts, E. Pauline Johnson, Charles Sangster, Charles Heavysege, Bliss Carman, and William Wilfred Campbell, excerpts were taken with the Canadian seasons as

their theme."⁵⁴

MacDonald had joined the Toronto Art Students League in 1902, when the theme for the calendar illustrated by his drawing Fishing Shanties at Bronte (Plate 7) was "recreation." He also designed the title page for the 1904 calendar. (Plate 8) The following year, 1896, the theme was "Wayside Notes of Wanderings over Canadian Roads" [accompanied by] "further verses by Roberts and Carman."⁵⁵

A further example of interaction between the Confederation poets and MacDonald and the Group of Seven was their mutual interest in theatre. In 1923, MacDonald designed the dustcover for The Unheroic North,⁵⁶ (Plate 54) a collection of four plays by Merrill Denison, a director of Hart House Theatre's first productions in 1919. Members of the Group were actively involved with this "little theatre," which included among its early productions the play, Pierre, by the poet Duncan Campbell Scott. Hart House Theatre was important in the growth of Canadian drama, as was this early support by groups like the Confederation poets and MacDonald and his friends. In later years, the nationalistic ideals of such groups were absorbed by the Canadian theatre movement which in 1930 sponsored a "competition in which the contestants were enjoined to attempt explicitly nationalistic drama set in a northern landscape and capturing, if possible, the mood of the painters in the Group of Seven."⁵⁷

This explicit relationship between the Group of Seven and later writers originated in the much earlier association with the "Poets of the Confederation" fostered by The Toronto Art Students League.

In addition, MacDonald had a more particular knowledge of these poets through designing and illustrating their books. His personal papers contain copies of poems by other poets, including Carman, which he had written out. Apart from his use of the same adjectival phrases and words as other poets MacDonald's poetry shows no discernible influence by the Confederation group and only superficial Canadian content.

Comparison of the form of his poetry with poetry by the Confederation poets makes strikingly apparent the "heaviness" of MacDonald's verse, produced by his overly stressed rhythms and High Victorian language. His adherence to this European usage, of course, is inconsistent with his stated adherence to Whitman's poetic concepts. The sole unifying factor in MacDonald's poetry is its transcendentalism and his poems lack the Canadian themes of "The Confederation Poets." This lack of Canadian content in his poetry is an inconsistency in the work of the senior member of Canada's first national group of painters, formally dedicated to the exclusive depiction of their native land.

NOTES

CHAPTER III

The tie that binds: Poetry/Transcenentalism

1 Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature, (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1836).

2 Raymond Emerson, ed., "Essays and Addresses," Essays, Addresses, and Poems of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Boston: The Riverside Press, 1903) pp. 1-280.

3 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File: "D- L, (1917? [sic]-1931), n.d." "Eyesight," n.d.

These eyes can only see the sun,
The clouds and sky in earthly guise;
They miss the sun of suns, the cloud of
clouds,
The sky enclosing skies.

These eyes can only see the flower,
That brightly shows where beauty lies;
They glimpse not beauty's self, too fine to
see
With sight of mortal eyes.

These eyes can only see the husk
Of all things, but in rapt surmise
Looks forth the soul,
With faith of beauty there
Beyond all known surprise.

4 Robert L. Beisner, "Commune in East Aurora," American Heritage, XXII, (Feb. 1971) p. 75.

5 Lewis M. Stark and John D. Gordon, Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass: A Centenary Exhibition from the Lion Whitman Collection and the Berg Collection of The New York Public Library (New York: The New York Public Library, 1955) p. 34.

6 Thoreau MacDonald, Notebooks (Moonbeam, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 1980) p. 87.

7 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File: "R-S, 1918-1931, n.d." "Rain and Song," n.d.

8 Paul Duval, The Tangled Garden: The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald (Scarborough, Ontario: Cerebrus/Prentice-Hall, 1978) p. 16.

9 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II, File: "R-S, 1918-1931, n.d." "Snowflake," 1900. (dated by MacDonald, with a query)

The morning sun is shining
Through golden threads of mist;
Weaving the snow with shadows
Of palest amethyst.

The high and quiet tree tops
Deep calm lift over all;
And in the radiant silence
The snowflakes twinkling fall.

And here upon my coat-sleeve
Fastens a crystal flake;
An angel's wondrous jewel
Of mystic faery make.

A flower of the sky-fields, -
Shed petal of a star, -
Foam of the sacred river, -
Crystal of heavenly spar.

In hosts they light and sparkle
Upon the fields of snow;
I walk among the plenty
And wonder as I go,

About the mighty maker,
Who at his pleasure swings
Vast forces of the cloud-lands
To form these tiny things.

I cannot tell the process;
I know not how or why:
I can but look with loving
Into the tender sky.

10 J. Russell Harper, Painting in Canada: A History (1966 rpt; Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1969) p. 269.

11 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "A-C, (1917? [sic]-1931), n.d." "Cemetery Hill," n.d.

The dim gravestones crowd the dark hillside,
 And along the ridge the high monuments are
 still against the sky;
 The young moon lifts and dives in the clear
 green among the flying clouds;
 The trees lean and strain before the beating
 wind;
 The sere grasses of earth toss and shiver:
 But in the noise and movement of all
 The old grey stones crowd the hill unmoved,
 And along the ridge the high monuments are
 still against cloud and lashing tree.

12 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "T-Y, 1918-1931, n.d." "The Worker," 1899.

Little grimy-golden child,
 Sitting by your mother's door;
 Sweeping with a brush the sand
 As you see her sweep the floor:

How you work to smooth away
 Sticks and stones that round you lie;
 Rapt as seer in a trance,
 Heedless of the passer-by.

Symbol of our human life;
 Little one, you seem to me:
 Thus mankind from age to age
 Smooth their earth continually.

Ever near us do we find
 Something that we wish away:
 Unappeased the earnest soul
 Seeks perfection day by day.

Happy one, I'd wish to live
 As I see you living now:
 Fronting all along my path,
 With as glad & intent brow:

Sweeping, sweeping at the sand:
 Sticks of trouble, stones of care:
 Making with a happy hand,
 Beauty for the spirit there.

13 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "R-S, 1918-1931, n.d." "Spring Evening - Wartime,"

n.d.

The pines rank solemnly about
 The hills that edge the level lands,
 Where strips of purple ploughing lie
 Between broad grey-green bands.

The troubled sky is hung with grey,
 In thickened roll and drooping fold,
 A building robin bustles near,
 With pleasure widely told.

The old man lays the burnished plough
 On the green headland till the dawn, -
 He tells of wounded sons abroad, -
 His horses dream withdrawn.

In livid spaces of the sky,
 A lonely airplane circles far,
 Weaving through cloud and field and heart,
 The throbbing spell of War.

14 Ibid. "Still Evening," n.d.

We stood to look on valley slopes,
 Where broken snows lay grey and cold
 And round our feet the setting sun,
 Threw leaf and weed in gold.

No sound came up from field or bush,
 And nothing moved in all the land,
 Save a blue chimney smoke that climbed
 Through pine tops near at hand.

Then a first robin twittered clear
 In the green clouding of the pine,
 A sleigh scaped by, a distant train
 Howled on the hidden line.

The silence drew about again,
 The hearty bird was silent too,
 We stood to hear him call again
 But further on he flew.

The young moon hung in apple boughs,
 And Venus poised with sparkling eye,
 And quietly the blue night touched
 The stars about the sky.

Sweetly we felt the turning year
 Set forth the snows, moon, stars and bird;

Nor shall a living heart be left
Unwakened or unheard.

15 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "M-Q, 1918-1931, n.d." "Night Sky," n.d (original
title of first eleven stanzas) / "Youth and the Night"
(original eleven stanzas with two added, and some
pencilled changes)

He trod in the sleigh-rut on the road,
Where May winds scatter the orchard's load.

And often marked through the woven trees,
Orion, Sirius, Pleiades.

Low in the west night's fairest child,
The shy young moon, hid her radiance mild.

In the whole round no clouded star;
The infinite open without a bar.

The city noises the night breeze tells
Softened to music and faery bells.

He stood to listen and looked with love,
On all about him and all above.

In the deep round no clouded star;
His soul rose into the Infinite far.

There in the silence the voice he found
That lingers ever the world around.

The jarring city came softly told
In tender music and bells of gold.

He stood to listen and heard with love
All sound about him, all calm above.

He wrote in the snow a lengthy line
"Purity such as this be mine"

Next morn he passed on the snowy road,
And looked with faith where the writing
showed

Gold with the blessing the glad sun threw
It's furrow filled with heavenly blue.

16 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,

File: "Misc. poems 1917-1918, n.d." "Evening in Spring," n.d.

He sees the couples in the park,
This fair May evening, slowly walking;
Or hears them in the blossomed dark
Of spreading shade trees lowly talking.

And sweetly comes the softened laugh
Of man or maid from many a nook:
He sees them seated here & there,
And feels intrusion in a look.

A loving glance, a half caress,
Are by quick accident revealed:
Sometimes he notes a waist embraced,
Or clasping hands they think concealed.

He catches ends of confidence;
The mock reproof, - cheap gallantry;
A mirth that irritates, - until
His spirit answers scoffingly,

"Fond fools, who walk in vulgar joy,
Drunken with love's enchanting sweet;
Unconscious of the paths of care
You enter with such willing feet;

Earth is a paradise again,
Before the bitter touched the bliss;
Too soon your tender hearts will know
The curse enfolded in the kiss"

So mocks he, till from sweeter thought
His cynic spirit draws away;
And as he wanders on alone,
He longs to be the same as they.

17 Harper, p. 239.

18 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "R-S 1916-1931, n.d." "Soul and Body" December 16,
1917.

Moonlight is sleeping
On field and hill
And I lay waking
To look my fill

I would be sleeping
Had body its will

Nor moonlight heeding
On field and hill

But soul wakes body
To take her fill
Of moonlight sleeping
On field and hill

Moonlight is sleeping
On field and hill
O Soul, tis glorious
Thou hast thy will

19 J.E.H. MacDonald, "Back Yards," West by East and other Poems by J.E.H. MacDonald (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1933) pp. 30-31.

Snow gardens,
Roofs all white,
A grey-white sky.
Fences all topped with snow
White door-steps,
Tufted trees, and washing white
Swayed in the windy flow.
And everywhere
From street to farm,
From farm to bush,
From bush to wild
The all-uniting snow.

Northward it draws a dream
...Of drifted cabins in the solitudes
Of wigwams smoking in Ungava woods
With fur or blanket swinging in the breeze
And far in tumbled trees
The yarded moose stalking his moody way
Along the snowpaths of his prisoned day;
And on to the darkened blue
Of Arctic wastes where the gaunt caribou
Walk to the wind, baring the mossy rocks
And haunted by the whitened wolf and fox.

Widens the dream...
Under the gay Aurora gleam,
To the broad yards of Eskimo.
Far horizons of beaten snow,
With little igloos rounded low
Nursing the life of Man
So runs our dreaming span
From yard to yard Canadian.
O Eskimo, the sun is here

Cutting his ice steps in the year
To bring you life again.

Let all Ungava's birches stir
With thrill of birds that sing of her
From Maryland to Maine.
And soon the south wind's merry blue
Will draw the running caribou
Across the crocus plain.
Blessed our land, that cannot lack
Backyards to run so deeply back.

20 Harper, p. 275.

21 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "R-S 1916-1931, n.d" "Streets of Gold", n.d.

Man lacks not Beauty, everywhere,
It waits upon the loving eye,
In field or sordid thoroughfare
It ever greets the passer by.

So mused I as I walked the town,
Where bargain-lovers thronged and sought, -
In quiet mood, with head bent down;
Nor looked to see the thing I thought.

When suddenly there drew my eye
From vagueness to a look intent
An old cigar stump, brown and dry,
Before me on the grey pavement.

Little its beauty, I must own,
Short-chewed and darkest of its kind, -
There on the sunny sidewalk thrown,
The refuse of a vulgar mind.

But the gay sun, that scatters free
His equal love, beside it threw
The token of his gallantry, -
A shadow round and heavenly-blue.

Fair as a flower the shadow seemed,
And beauty's gift to me did bring -
It gladdened me as when I've dreamed
Above the first formed flower of Spring.

I heeded not the hurried crew,
The hot and noisy thoroughfare, -
Serene I passed, for deep I knew

Man lacks not beauty anywhere.

I joined the traffic of the street,
And let its current bear me on:
I felt its pulses press to meet
Where Being merges into one.

And in the face of man and maid,
And in the light in street & sky,
I saw the hidden truth displayed
In beauty that could never die.

22 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "T-Y 1918-1929, n.d." "Vacant Lots," n.d.

The city quarrels with the stars.
But here beyond its glittering hem
The stars look down on quiet fields
And quiet fields look up to them.

I walk the streets and see the stars
In furtive gleams of friendliness,
But here upon the lowly sod
They greet my soul with full caress.

23 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "D-L (1917? [sic]-1931), n.d." "Improvements," n.d.

24 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "M-Q 1918-1932, n.d." "The Passing of Zeppelin," n.d.

Low lies the vulture, lifeless wings at rest,
No more he'll spread them in the sacred sky,
He'll need them not upon his downward quest
Fold them and drop him deep where he would
lie.

I saw a cherub land upon a cloud
Chanting a kindly psalm to soothe his way
With older heads above them gravely bowed
In sad forgiveness of this earthly day.

And we would fain be like them, but our
heart,
Still beats with mortal pulse, and scorns the
man
Perverting life and mind with titan art,
To crush his fellows to the tiger plan.

He might have come with healing on his wing
 Soaring with nations blessing him below,
 He chose instead a demon brood to bring
 Dropping a blighting excrement of woe.

Farewell old Vulture, tragic in your rest:
 Perhaps you read the moral of your flight
 "Hate brings but failure, Love the happy
 quest"
 Our heart may yet forgive you e'er the night.

25 MacDonald, "An Ode at Graveyard Corners," p. 20.

26 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "M-Q 1918-1932, n.d." "November Garden," n.d.

27 Ibid, "Old David," n.d.

28 Ibid, "On a Prairie Train," n.d.

29 Ibid, "Quick Sketch," January 13, 1929.

30 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "T-Y 1918-1929, n.d." "Wind in the Pines," n.d.

Though waters beat long miles away
 The voice of waves is in the pines:-
 Waves that advance and break and play,
 With land and cloud in mighty lines.

The voice of waves is in the pines,-
 Waves lifting on a shoreless sea;
 The weary waves of weary time;
 Dark billows of eternity.

Though waters beat long miles away,
 The pines are like a sounding shore,
 With breakers tossing happy spray
 And sorrows ended evermore.

The voice of waves is in the pines;
 It swells and falls in thundering strife,
 All dooms and glories, joys and griefs,-
 The clashing of the sea of life.

Though waters beat long miles away,
 Here stands the soul upon a shore,
 Rapt with life's inner blessedness,-
 the burden of the billows roar.

31 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
File: "A-C (1917? [sic]-1931), n.d." "April Drums," n.d.

The motley weaving of the street
Parts at the tread of marching feet:
The lusty bugles drive along
The clang and hubbub of the throng.
And all things find their pulsing soul
In the grave drums' abounding roll
While youthful April gazed down,
With eyes that ne'er have known a frown,
On a fair flag of stripe and star
New-lifted to the winds of war.

The steady drums we long have heard,
Three saddened Aprils now they've stirred
To promptings, not for leaf or bird
But for the straitened hearts of men,
Urging to larger strength again.
And so the listening hearts have gone
To death and struggle streaming on,
Bearing their steadfast banners far
Against the demon hosts of war.

But one great people piled aloof,
Nor heeded 'neath their arching roof,
While the great mill-wheels constant whirred
Those saddened Aprils, wonder-stirred
To promptings not for leaf or bird;
Intent, they piled their heaping gold
While others died their life to hold,
Bearing the glorious banner far
Within the demon hosts of war;
Until one desperate call of Man
Above the whirring mill-wheels ran,
Casting a flashing word supreme
That turned to flame the selfish dream.

So tender April, looking down
On smoke and bustle of the town,
Smiles at the flag of stripe and star
Flung greatly to the winds of war;
O comrades! vent a gladden's cheer,
Our brothers of the South are here!
The soul of man is hard afoot,
Invincible against the Brute;
O Bugles! now you drive a note
to Man in every clime remote.
O Drums! your mighty pulsings bound
From heart to heart the world around.

O marching feet! you stronger tread
 Towards the nearing goal ahead.
 Blow, Bugles, blow! roll proudly Drums!
 Humanity behind you comes.

32 Ibid. "February Faith," n.d.

The level threads of flying sleet,
 Thick-woven through the rearing trees,
 Fill the dim ways where April's feet
 Shall rest in gentler days than these.

The blasts that through the cedars blow,
 Hasten the time for which e long;
 When roadside brooks of thawing snow
 Go rippling to the robin's song.

And quietly this woodland slope
 Waits under piling drifts unseen,
 To bring the trilliums of our hope
 in snowy hosts among the green.

33 Elizabeth Bergmann Lizeaux, Yeats and the Visual Arts
 (New Brunswick: Rutgers, The State University, 1986) p. 58.

34 Ibid. p. 59.

35 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "T-Y 1918-1929, n.d." "The Way of the Stars," n.d.

36 C.W. Leadbeater, The Wisdom of the Stars (Adyar,
 Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1917)

37 Line 1: The Solemn Land, 1921
 Line 2: Leaves in the Brook, 1919
 Line 3: Young Maples, Algoma, 1918
 Line 4: The Lake, October Evening 1922
 Lines 5- 6: Beaver Pond, Algoma, 1919
 Lines 7- 8
 Lines 9-10: Rowanberries, Algoma, 1922
 Lines 11-14: Autumn in Algoma, 1921

38 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. II,
 File: "T-Y 1918-1929, n.d." "Venison," n.d.

39 Bliss Carman, Later Poems (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1921)

40 Lionel Stevenson, Appraisals of Canadian Literature
 (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1926) p.
 160.

41 Charles G.D. Roberts, A History of Canada (1897; rpt. Toronto: George N. Morang & Company, Limited, 1902) p. 418.

42 Ibid. p. 427.

43 Robert Lecker, Jack David and Ellen Quigley, Eds., George Woodcock, introd., Canadian Writers and their Works Poetry Series, Volume Two (Downsview; ECW Press, 1983) p. 7.

44 Douglas Lochhead, Gen., Ed., At the Mermaid Inn: Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott in The Globe 1892-93 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1979) p. 34.

45 Carl F. Klinck, Gen., Ed., Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English, Volume Two, Second Edition (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1976) p. 344.

46 Stevenson, pp. 51-52.

47 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. III, Lecture: "An Artist's view of Walt Whitman" (MS) n.d., incomplete, [notation by Thoreau MacDonald on first page: "Read to the English Assoc., Toronto Rf. Library, College & St. George St., October 1926. It was criticized by a learned member of the audience but got a fiery defence from Miss Emma Goldman, the labor agitator & leader." TM], "An Artist's View of Walt Whitman," n.d., [incomplete] Notes: "On Whitman" - Arts and Letters Club," (MS) 28th January, 1927.

48 Lecker, (Woodcock introd.) p. 7.

49 Desmond Pacey, Creative Writing in Canada: A Short History of English-Canadian Literature (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1952) p. 2.

50 Ibid. p. 199.

51 Tom Marshall, Harsh and Lovely Land: The major Canadian Poets and the Making of a Canadian Tradition (Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press, 1979) p. 6.

52 Pacey, p. 41.

53 William Colgate, The Toronto Art Students' League 1886-1904 (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1954) p. 29.

54 Ibid. p. 21.

55 Ibid. p. 21.

56 Merrill Denison, The Unheroic North (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923)

57 Klinck, p. 148.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of Commercial Work

From 1911, when he resigned from his employment at Grip Limited, until 1921, when he became a permanent member of the teaching staff of the Ontario College of Art, MacDonald supported himself and his family solely by free-lance work as a commercial designer, writer and lecturer and by sessional teaching and grading. As Thoreau MacDonald wrote shortly after his father's death in 1932, MacDonald's only time for himself was three or four weeks a year "in between designing and teaching which later took nearly all his time."¹

In 1893, after completion of his apprenticeship to The Toronto Lithography Company,² (Plates 3, 4) MacDonald's first employment had been with the stone engraving firm, C.E. Preston & Co., of Toronto. His training there, "with its emphasis on line and proportion"³ was the basis of his later specialization in lettering. He worked at Preston's until he joined Grip Limited (Plates 5, 6) in 1894.

Through his association with the Toronto Lithography Company and later Grip Limited, and by constant study of the art magazines, notably The Studio, imported by those firms, MacDonald learned to use the linear styles of Art Nouveau and William Morris. In Art Nouveau, line is dominant, creating spaces which have character independent of the line, and which express in a different way the pattern initially described by it. William Morris used a continuous line to create an intricate, all-over pattern of plant forms.⁴

Nothing is known of any work completed by MacDonald in this period and the only known works related to his engraving apprenticeship were completed many years later. One was the 1917 brass plaque to the memory of Tom Thomson (Plate 36) of which MacDonald was the "author of both the text and design."⁵ The body of the text on this plaque is in free rustic Roman capitals with pen characteristics, and in the relationship of the mass of the lettering itself to the unprinted area, it is "light" in colour. Although the rustic Roman is derived from square Roman lettering, MacDonald has in some letters lengthened and curved their "descenders," the parts of the stroke below the line. The effect is one of containment and consolidation of the mass of the text. The elongated strokes, together with the decorative flower and leaf based "fleuron" line fillers in the unprinted space of the text, effectively maintain an overall texture and unity in the printed area. This overall texture delineates the text and effectively separates it from the unprinted area surrounding it.

MacDonald used a number of different sizes of lettering, as well as varied spacing, to produce a balanced variety in the texture of the printed area. This texture did not detract from its legibility, and larger lettering also stressed the more important statements in the text. Nevertheless, there is a cramped feeling to this design and in black and white reproduction nothing in it suggests that it was in fact engraved on metal rather than drawn on paper.

MacDonald "was, too, an ardent naturalist who loved, in his designs, Canadian motifs, the trillium, pine trees, blue jays and various kinds of wild life."⁶ In the Thomson plaque (Plate 36) Canadian forest motifs are used as fillers, appropriate in a tribute to a Canadian artist who was also a "woodsman and guide." MacDonald's pencil drawings of balsam, (Plate 34) cedar, (Plate 55) and trillium (Plate 56) from his sketchbook of 1915-1922⁷ relate to the woodland motifs he used in the Thomson plaque (Plate 36) and also in his book decorations.

MacDonald used a slide of the Thomson plaque (Plate 36) as an example of modern Canadian lettering in "Design Lecture IV" given in 1922 and 1925, as well as drawing his students' attention to other examples of "good Roman lettering" in Toronto.⁸

The sole reference to another commission related to

MacDonald's early training is contained in the same lecture notes. This commission was for the public hall of The National Trust Company's offices on King Street East, Toronto, still extant, probably completed in 1921. The work consisted of

a large tablet etched in brass and decorated with shields of Gt. Britain and Canada made in coloured enamels. The national emblems are in red and blue, the lettering is mostly filled in black, the backgrounds in the upper and lower panels being oxidized darker for relief. The lettering is a free Roman modified and developed so as to give it an engraved look in the lower panel and a hammered appearance in the upper.

In the design of this tablet, MacDonald has developed lettering which reflects the particular characteristics of the material for which it is designed, a consideration lacking in the earlier Thomson plaque. (Plate 36)

MacDonald drew his students' attention to "the concentration of the letter masses," in this National Trust commission, to which he presumably devoted the same attention as he did in the Thomson plaque. (Plate 36) He asked them to consider also "the ruling of the spaces, the laying out of margins, etc." and he stressed the technicalities involved and the large amount of work necessary in commissions of this nature.

In 1907, Tom Thomson (1877-1917), "whose speciality was lettering"¹⁰ was hired by Grip Limited. Thomson's previous employment in Toronto had been as a senior artist¹¹ yet

"his skill with lettering placed him under J.E.H. MacDonald,"¹² indicating clearly that lettering was MacDonald's area of specialization at Grip Limited. In addition to his full time work at Grip Limited, MacDonald undertook free-lance commissions often related to lettering.

In 1909,¹³ for instance, MacDonald accepted an appointment as Supervisor of the Department of Commercial Design, Shaw Correspondence Schools, (affiliated with the Central Business College, Toronto, founded by William Henry Shaw in 1892). He retained this appointment until 1917 and is listed as a member of the School's Staff in its Prospectus.¹⁴ His duties included the setting and grading of examinations in specialized design areas among which was lettering. An example of MacDonald's Gothic lettering, an embellished Black Letter alphabet, (Plate 57) signed by him, is printed in the Prospectus.¹⁵ Even in this alphabet, MacDonald's concern with an overall balanced texture is evident. In this case, by judicious spacing, the printed area is "lighter" than usual for such a style and, as in the Thomson plaque, MacDonald has used varied spacing, linked strokes and fleuron to maintain the even pattern of the printed area.

Lower case "Black letter" with capitals embellished with backstrap interlacing was used by MacDonald in his penmanship of Certificates of Proficiency for graduates of the Ontario

College of Art. (Plate 58) The solidity of the printed mass and textural considerations are abandoned in this design and the grandeur of the six lines of lettering dominates the page. There are no fillers in this design. A finely drawn rectangle defines the printed area except where two of the three magnificent capitals break through it into the surrounding space. Variation in lettering size is used in combination with varied spacing to produce a superb design. Lettering size also designates an order of importance in which the College is dominant and the student's name and qualification are given greater stress than the titles of President and Council.

MacDonald also used in his lecture another example of local work, a Roman lettered Certificate designed by him for an Architect's Association. He stated that "it is a design made intentionally rather ornamental as it is intended to be framed and hung up in an office."¹⁶ MacDonald also discussed the symbolism of its motifs, explaining that he wished to combine "the classical acanthus scroll with Canadian Symbolism,"¹⁷ represented by Canadian flowers and trees as in the Thomson plaque. (Plate 36) MacDonald again draws his students' attention to the "concentration and emphasis of the lettering masses, small and close or large and open as needed and the placing of the last clause in relation to the spaces for signature."¹⁸ MacDonald's use

of red ink as a second colour is a characteristic of the style of Morris and his followers¹⁹

MacDonald's sensitivity to lettering design is apparent in the examples given and MacDonald's own descriptions of them. The clearly discernible difference between his handling of "Black Letter" and "Roman" lettering shows that his stated preference for the latter is based upon its adaptability to considerations of mass and texture not possible with "Black Letter." Moreover, his notes and lectures show that Roman lettering symbolised for MacDonald the virtues of the Classical age, and that with its use he sought "a local development of Classical ideals."²⁰

Such idealism would have had little application to MacDonald's work at Grip Limited, the company he joined in 1894. Later that year MacDonald wrote to Joan Lavis "I've passed this week in the same old way, in the same old place, with my nose down to the same old work."²¹ While the projects undertaken by Grip Limited would have been of great variety, they would, however, have been tedious and repetitious; repeated design layouts for stores like The T. Eaton Company or Sears, small drawings for reproduction in advertisements and catalogues, etc., or labels for the vast variety of goods produced by and for an increasingly urbanized and industrialized Canadian society.

Commercial art studios used advanced technology and a

team of artists to compete in the efficient marketing of goods and services. In competitive marketing, the time taken to complete projects was crucial and so commercial studios like Grip Limited subscribed to greatnumbers of illustrated publications, cutting out and sorting their illustrations for use as source material. Such eclecticism became a necessary attribute of a commmercial artist, and MacDonald himself described how in 1897 he culled a photograph of a real person of the appropriate type from an English illustrated paper and used it to represent the fictitious doctor on a label for

Dr. Clarke's Stomach and Liver Tonic.²²

No notebooks or sketchbooks by Macdonald exist for 1903-1907, the years when he worked in London for Carlton Studio and "none of MacDonald's commercial designs of the London period is known to exist."²³ However, examples of books designed in 1900 by "Carlton's English associate, A.A. Turbayne"²⁴ can be presumed to be representative of the famous "Carlton Studio style." As MacDonald had been hired as a book designer in 1903,²⁵ Turbayne was likely a strong stylistic influence in book design while MacDonald no doubt gained valuable experience in other areas of the prestigious studio's interests. Carlton Studio had been founded by MacDonald's old friends Archibald Abernethy Martin, (died 1954) W.T. Wallace, Thomas Garland Greene (1875-1955) and Norman Price. "Carlton's philosophy was the desire to apply

the ideals of William Morris and the Beggarstaffe (sic) Brothers to commercial printing and advertising."²⁶

Archie Martin, later the President of Carlton Studio, "had learned the art of hand-lettering from his stepfather," Alfred Harold Howard (1854-1916) R.C.A. "Hand-lettering at the Carlton Studio was of itself distinctive and beautiful," but "it was the work of Norman Price that made the Carlton Studio's first big hit."²⁷

Its success can be gauged by the fact that "within a few decades Carlton was considered to be the largest advertising house in the world," and when Selfridge, the American store owner from Chicago opened his American style store in London, he used full-page advertisements in all the leading London newspapers, all of them "designed in the Carlton Studio."²⁸ Selfridge's records, Carlton's record and those of the publishers known to have dealt with Carlton, were all destroyed in World War II.

MacDonald and his family returned to Canada in 1907 and he resumed employment at Grip Limited as a senior designer, with "book covers" added to lettering as his known areas of specialization.

"Although MacDonald very early became one of Toronto's leading designers, particularly in book design, little of

that work remains or can be identified."²⁹ Canadian artists had "illustrated books in a fairly conservative style in the early 1900's," [but it was not until] "some years later, [that] the Group of Seven spearheaded the revival of interest in good design."³⁰

MacDonald used a great variety of styles in the books known to have been designed by him, though his personal bias seemed to be towards "light" rather than "heavy" in the proportions of printed areas and their mass to unprinted areas. Although Thoreau MacDonald was consistently involved in the lettering of books designed by his father, it is felt that their Roman lettering represented his father's preference rather than his own.

Prior to 1920, MacDonald completed a folder for a series of advertisements for The National Trust Company Limited, titled The Old Fashioned Executor.³¹ (Plate 59) The decorations on the front of this folder follow the Kelmscott format and proportions, with the text subjugated to the strong contrast of the patterned border, as in the specimen page of Morris' uncompleted project for Froissart³² (Plate 60). MacDonald's design is much "lighter" but the exaggerated Art Nouveau curves of its lettering make the text subordinate to the patterned area.

A similarly "light" design in the Kelmscott style, with

a domination of decoration over text can be seen in a 1900 design for the Encyclopaedia Biblica³³ (Plate 6) by A.A. Turbayne, MacDonald's English associate at Carlton Studio. In Turbayne's design, the three central capitals can hardly be distinguished from their surrounding leafy backstrap decoration, which surrounds the two single word lines of text. Turbayne, like MacDonald, used fleuron fillers for what little line space is unprinted.

The foliage and rose decorations in Turbayne's design for the cover of The Shakespeare Anthology³⁰ (Plate 62) occupy the whole cover except for three lines of one word each. The decoration, however, is much broader in design than in the Encyclopaedia Biblica (Plate 61) and more widely spaced. Also, the upward movement of the linear branches directs the eye to the small area of text, which gains added emphasis from the contrast of its straight lines with the surrounding curvilinear forms. The same design strategies are used by MacDonald in such later book designs as the 1922 Fires of Driftwood.³⁵ (Plate 63)

Fleuron fillers are again used by Turbayne in a very minimal textual area in his design for The annals of the Parish and the Ayrshire Legatees³⁶ (Plate 64). In this design, the over-all decoration occupies over three-quarters of the cover but the flowering vine decoration, as in The Shakespeare Anthology, (Plate 62) is not as dense a pattern

as in the Encyclopaedia Biblica. (Plate 61) There is an upward movement of the main branches of the vine which supports the text and leads the eye to it. The decoration itself has more tonal contrasts than in Turbayne's other designs and is also "lighter" in texture.

In all three designs, Turbayne signs his work with his logo, a combination of his initials forming a beetle which, in its environment of lush Kelmscott foliage and flowers, seems either a modern "vanitas" symbol or a witty comparison with the aesthetic "butterfly."

Certainly a fourth book design by this Carlton designer has as much, if not more, in common with the Aesthetic movement and the rectilinear Art Nouveau style of Charles Ricketts (1866-1931) than with the Kelmscott format. Turbayne's fittingly dignified design for the cover of The Life and Works of Tennyson³⁷ (Plate 65) has an elegant stylized floral decoration on its spine and a circular stamp echoing the spine's decoration is placed slightly off centre on the front of the cover.

In an article in The Studio in 1900,³⁸ Turbayne's peacock cover design for an edition of Spenser's Faerie Queen³⁹ (Plate 66) was very favourably reviewed. Turbayne was ranked as a designer with Walter Crane (1845-1915). Crane and his work was greatly admired by MacDonald in his

Lettering" lectures and Turbayne was likely a potent direct influence upon him during their years at Carlton Studio.

In 1921 MacDonald designed the decorations for an edition of the Later Poems of Bliss Carman⁴⁰ (Plates 52, 53, 67) in which some lettering was designed by Thoreau MacDonald. In 1917, when his father's health broke down, the sixteen year old boy had "suddenly found himself helping with design commissions and working much more closely under his father's supervision" and from that time on he acted as his father's "dedicated assistant" until MacDonald's death.⁴¹

Compared with The Old Fashioned Executor (Plate 59) the decorations of Later Poems (Plates 52, 53, 67) are a more restrained version of the Kelmscott tradition, with a smaller closely-patterned border complementing rather than dominating the beautifully proportioned and positioned text on the title page. (Plate 52) Nevertheless, the border is still very much in the Kelmscott tradition in its intricate patterned density and woodland motifs, branches, flowers, leaves and birds. The white verticals of the boughs in MacDonald's design are reminiscent of similar white verticals in an American edition of Morris' The Art of The People, published by Morris' American disciple, Ralph Fletcher Seymour in 1902.⁴²

The endpapers of Later Poems (Plate 53) have a narrow

border incorporating the same Canadian motifs as the title page border, three of which, pine, trillium and blue jay, MacDonald had previously used in the Thomson plaque (Plate 36) and in the Architects' Association Certificate. To these, MacDonald has added another flower, while the title page border includes cosmic motifs. A small circular logo, Pan playing his pipes in a forest setting, is placed just below the centre of the title page. Stamped on the lightly textured sea-green cover, (Plate 67) of lightly textured cloth covered board, is an enclosed patterned area of five naturalistic woodland motifs, flanked by small stylized pine fronds and cones. The title, in Roman capitals, is stamped in gold above the decoration.

Despite their related contents, there is a stylistic difference between the title page border and the endpapers' border, (Plate 53) the former being closer to the Kelmscott tradition and the latter more akin to "the Arts and Crafts approach with its heavy, blunt lines."⁴³. The juxtaposition of naturalistic and stylized flowers detracts from the merits of both, while the centralized title page logo, a closed, static and self-contained form, conflicts with the writhing verticality of the border around it.

In 1922, MacDonald designed the decorations and Thoreau the lettering for a new illustrated edition of Legends of Vancouver,⁴⁴ by the Indian princess, Pauline Johnson. On

the title page, (Plate 44) MacDonald incorporated Indian motifs, fox, raven and eagle, with Canadian sea and mountain scenery motifs, an island, "Siwash Rock," conifers and rushing water, all enclosed in a frame decorated with appears to be a porcupine quill design. Two large conifers form a curtain-like coulisse but their scale and position in relation to other elements of the design is ambiguous and there is an unconvincing fusion of the middle and foreground, accentuated by inappropriate relationships in size. This results from MacDonald's attempt to reduce to flat pattern the naturalistic elements of his design, with a consequent loss of visual coherence.

There are in this design also conflicts between the varying styles of its decorations and their content. Integration does not result merely by their juxtaposition. Turbayne successfully used the contrast between straight and curved line to accentuate the text in the title page of The Shakespeare Anthology. (Plate 62) In MacDonald's design for the title page of Legends of Vancouver (Plate 44) there is no functional relationship between the style and content of the angular frame and eagle decoration and the nervous energy of the varied strokes of the rest of the design, in which there are no straight even lines. An even greater conflict of style occurs in MacDonald's endpaper design for this book, (Plate 68) a flat repetitive pattern of stylized canoes and fish forms tied together, literally, by a

sea-serpent interlace. This broad, stylized endpaper design has no relationship to either of the two styles of the title page. A similar divergence of painting styles has been noted from 1913 on, one using deep space defined by curvilinear forms and the other using flat angular forms.

There is a sloping recession to the endpaper design, (Plate 68) from the diminishing of flat detail from front to back. This overall incline from back to front results in a downward movement of the pattern and it is presumed that it was to halt this movement off the page that MacDonald added a bottom border, containing freely drawn, angular black motifs, their scale and shape at variance with the curvilinear flowing lines of the repetitive design above them.

In the 1922 Fires of Driftwood, a book of poetry by Isabel Ecclestone MacKay, the decorations are by MacDonald and the lettering by Thoreau MacDonald, with both attaining an attenuated elegance of design in strong contrast to previous decorations and lettering. On the title page, (Plate 63) the flames of a driftwood fire at the edge of the sea rise from the immediate foreground. The flames form an ascending vertical which crosses at right angles the freely drawn horizontals depicting distant sea and shoreline. The flames rise in front of an elevated edged circle, which could be either a new or a full moon, with stars on either side. This fire, its base the "heavy" close-textured undulation of

the sea, supports a text of elegantly accented lettering, the fineness of its thin strokes in contrast to the almost cuneiform thickening of its heavy strokes. A dark patterned canopy curbs any upward movement and echoes the upper curve of the moon. The heaviness of the canopy is softened by both its own black and white pattern and the stars above it. The whole design is enclosed within undulating triple lines, which echo the rhythm of the waves, the flames and the lines linking the stars above the canopy.

This design echoes Turbayne's seal on the cover of The Works of Tennyson, (Plate 65) while the new symmetrical and linear qualities have more in common with rectilinear Art Nouveau than with the heavier Kelmscott style of earlier designs by MacDonald. This design is closely related to styles developed by Morris' disciple, Charles Ricketts, and by T.B. Meteyard for his design for a 1895 edition of Carman's Behind the Arras: A book of the Unseen.⁴⁵

Another 1922 book of poetry decorated by MacDonald in the rectilinear Art Nouveau style was The Woodcarver's Wife⁴⁶ by Marjorie Pickthall. Thoreau again designed the Roman lettering. A circle is used in the title page (Plate 69) to enclose the author's name and, as in Fires of Driftwood, (Plate 63) an enclosing upper canopy echoes the curve of this circle. There is a Neo-Classical feel to this

design, perhaps from the combination of Roman lettering in a linear enclosure reminiscent of a Classical Greek stele. Two new motifs are used with restraint, one possibly the woodland hepatica and the other a fleur-de-lis.

The blue endpapers (Plate 70) echo the title page, decorated with delicately drawn flowering vines, in which, framed by fleur-de-lis, is a medallion, echoing the stele shape of the title page, containing a stylized female bust. MacDonald's use of delicate line and a medallion again resembles Ricketts' style and the variations of it adopted by "Kelmscott inspired books"⁴⁷ published in North America. (Plate 71)

In the 1923 decorations for Stories of the Land of Evangeline⁴⁸ by Grace McLeod Rogers, the rectilinear Art Nouveau style is dominant, though MacDonald also incorporates elements of his previous, heavier Kelmscott style. The title page (Plate 72) has a border of what appear to be the disjointed components of an interlace border against a black background, almost as if the motifs' vine or foliage links had been previously drawn and then inked over. Another decorated page (Plate 73) duplicates the title page, except that its textual area is replaced with a female figure in a landscape, and another stylized flower is introduced, reminiscent of the stylized roses of Turbayne's border for

Encyclopaedia Biblica.

In the little landscape, recession into space in a flat design is achieved by a detailed high foreground of grass and flowers, linked to the distant horizon by the vertical of the female figure. The middle ground is given added definition by the diagonal formed by the tips of the branches of a weeping willow branch which fills the upper right hand corner, just as in his 1909 poster The Atlantic Royals for The Royal Line, (Plate 75) MacDonald used upper diagonals of cloud and smoke for the same purpose.

In his 1923 decorations for The Rosary of Pan⁴⁶, MacDonald successfully combined the rectilinear style of Fires of Driftwood (Plates 51, 70) and The Woodcarver's Wife (Plates 69, 70, 71) with his older "heavier" Kelmscott style. A finely drawn stylized floral vine flanks each side of the title page (Plate 75) and the Roman lettered text by Thoreau is enclosed by a heavily drawn rectangle. Beneath it, by some classical ruins (Plate 77)⁴⁷ sits the figure of a satyr, Pan, now old and bearded in contrast to the boyish Pan in the title page logo of Later Poems. Detailed variegated foliage fills the foreground in front of Pan and recession into space is achieved by means of a diagonal movement from right to left, with background and foreground united by the vertical of the column. The title

page decoration is repeated on the cover, printed in dark sea green on a pale green board with labelled title elements on the cover and spine, as was typical of Arts and Crafts book design.

In 1923 MacDonald designed the dust-cover (Plate 54) for his friend Merrill Denison's The Unheroic North,⁵¹ a collection of four plays, two of which had been the first productions for Hart House Theatre and The Arts and Letters Players. The large Roman letters of the text, designed by Thoreau MacDonald, are balanced by a very "heavy" dark landscape scene which is linked to the horizontals of the text by the vertical of a tree behind the buildings. MacDonald's strokes in this design are a reversion to the Arts and Crafts style, heavy and blunt, but the design is a bold simplification and refinement of his original style. In 1919 he made some illustrations for a book by another Hart House director, his friend Roy Mitchell.⁵² In MacDonald's 1915-1922 sketchbook, two pages of drawings of weapons and musical instruments (Plates 77, 78) were used for some of these illustrations and demonstrate a change in MacDonald's style of drawing.

MacDonald's 1924 design, used for both the endpapers and dust jacket (Plate 79) of White Winds of Dawn,⁵³ a book of poetry by Frances Beatrice Taylor, is equally bold, with a very open patterned linearity to its view of a seashore. The

horizontal curves of the shore and the vertical curves of a line of trees are given added emphasis by their contrast with the horizontal wavy bands representing the sea. Two viking ships, of different sizes, are shown as black silhouettes on the horizon, giving an illusion of depth despite the flatness of the design. There is no depth in MacDonald's design in 1924 for the endpapers of Old Province Tales⁵⁴ (Plate 80), a quaintly inaccurate map of Nova Scotia, incorporating his favourite motifs: ships of different types, fish, maple leaves, pine cones and fronds and thistles.

MacDonald's old friend, Lorne Pierce, was appointed Editor of The Ryerson Press in 1920, and in 1926 he commissioned MacDonald to design a Poetry Chap-Book cover for Forfeit and Other Poems⁵⁵ (Plate 81) by Kathryn Munro. In MacDonald's original design, a foreground diagonal space, widening from right to left, is filled with variegated stylized foliage out of which grows a vertical pine, bearing a canopy of stylized foliage. In the middle ground, MacDonald has stylized valleys and linear mountains as a background to the title text. It is a far from successful design and sometime after MacDonald's death in 1932, it was modified by Thoreau MacDonald (Plate 82). He thickened the previously unstable tree and replaced the linear qualities with textural ones in the landscape middle ground. He also widened and reduced the height of the landscape and simplified some foreground areas. After 1932, the cover was

used, signed with both Thoreau's initials and his father's.⁵⁶

Thoreau's improvements isolate certain of MacDonald's design characteristics, particularly his concern with harmonious balance. To accommodate on the Chap-Book cover its seven lines of text in their unprinted rectangle and yet maintain his ideals of balance, MacDonald had to make the tree trunk unrealistically thin in relation to the mass of its foliage. In order to balance the exposed white paper of the text - his instinct being to integrate it, rather than have it stand out - MacDonald exposed a similar proportion of white in its background. This was done by outlining unprinted areas in the mountainscape which, so that it would be in vertical balance with the rectangle they flanked, MacDonald also sharpened and heightened. To stop the upward movement of these sharpened peaks, MacDonald extended and stylized the tree's foliage to form a dense canopy above them. In order to achieve a balance between this "heavy" canopy and the foreground, MacDonald enlarged and stylized its plant forms. Thoreau MacDonald's design improvements were merely a reversal of his father's procedures.

MacDonald's design in 1927 for the endpapers of The Land of Ultima Thule⁵⁷ (Plate 83) is a very simple one, its highly stylized elements relating to components of previous designs. The circular sun or moon was first used in

Fires of Driftwood, (Plate 63) the undulating wave was used in White Winds of Dawn, (Plate 79) while flying birds were a major element in a Talwin Morris cover design published in The Studio in 1898.⁵⁸

The design for the title page (Plate 84) of Lord of the Silver Dragon: A Romance of Lief the Lucky,⁵⁹ is equally eclectic. It has an asymmetrical Kelmscott style border, with its interlace lightened by the same broadening used by Turbayne in The Shakespeare Anthology. (Plate 62) This dragon-style interlace is reminiscent of the sea-serpent design in the Legends of Vancouver endpapers (Plate 68) and title page has the same viking ship used in White Winds of Dawn. (Plate 79) Another of the decorated pages of Lord of the Silver Dragon (Plate 85) uses the same ship motif, with trillium used in the foreground. In between the stark, black trunks of stylized trees, looming over the foreground, can be seen the shapes of black tents, silhouetted against the sea and a small viking ship silhouetted against the setting sun.

The unseemly stylistic contrast between the stark modernity of this latter decoration and its Kelmscott style border is mitigated by the use in the border of motifs linking it to the decoration, viking boats, horses and vikings themselves.

There is no true recession into space in this essentially flat design, merely the illusion of an incline from horizon to shore, where its movement is effectively blocked by the black mass of the tents. The broken horizontal line formed by the two top petals of each flower of a row of trillium also forms a more sophisticated version of the base border used in the endpapers (Plate 68) of Legends of Vancouver to counteract a sliding movement in the design.

Many of the design elements consistently repeated in MacDonald's book designs had already been used by him in other media. In 1909⁶⁰ at Grip Limited, he had designed a poster for Canadian Northern Steamships Limited, (Plate 74) in which the sea is depicted with the same stylized, undulating lines seen in so many of his book designs. Six lines of white text superimposed on the dark stylized sea, on the bottom right, balance the dark vertical mass on the left formed by the passenger steamer. A further large advertisement is printed on the black smoke billowing diagonally from the steamer and this diagonal movement is echoed in the smoke from a smaller vessel, and reinforced by a diagonal formed by the clouds. The placing of the smaller vessel calls to mind its counterpart in Morrice's The Ferry, Quebec, also of 1909. This smaller boat not only reinforces the diagonal movement but also establishes a

middle ground in front of the closed backdrop of clouds, to which the foreground and the steamer are linked by the smoke from the steamer stacks. The design formula, foreground horizontals linked to the background by verticals, softened by one or more diagonals, is also used in a majority of MacDonald's book designs and decorations.

In 1914, MacDonald's entry "Canada and the Call" (Plate 86) was first in the Royal Canadian Academy's competition for a poster to advertise its Patriotic Fund Exhibition. One source for the imagery of this poster "might have been the English trade-union banners, which MacDonald could have encountered while working for Carlton Studios in London from 1903 to 1907."⁶¹ Five lines of cramped but legible Roman lettering of varied size form the base of the design, with maple leaf fleuron used to fill spaces that might otherwise detract from the solidity and stability of this textual base. The central focus of the design, a classical figure, flanked by a young farmer, stands erect in an elevated foreground space defined by the horizontals of the text and the soldiers. Dark blue water forms the middleground, stretching to the background's distant shore which is linked to the foreground by the flag held by the vertical female figure. A plough held at an angle by the workman forms a diagonal which softens the intersection of horizontal with vertical.

MacDonald "put all his genius for composition and feel for materials into "Canada and the Call"⁶² (Plate 86) and the poster is indeed attractive. Nevertheless, the design is for MacDonald in no way innovative, being a careful variation of a formula evolved by him many years before. In this design, also, there are traces of classicism, in the female figure, of course, but also in the basis of MacDonald's design conception, a monumental classical figure raised on a "plinth," in this case the text.

The same design formula, based on horizontals and verticals with an added diagonal interest, was used in another design by MacDonald, the 1919 Canadian National Exhibition Victory Year souvenir programme-cover (Plate 87). This, like its programme-covers in other years were "issued simultaneously as posters"⁶³ by the Canadian National Exhibition Association. A powerful drawing of the front torso of a horse in MacDonald's 1915-1922 sketchbook (Plate 88) was the basis of an important part of this design, the model for the drawing being a small plaster cast of one owned by the MacDonald family. It is a tribute to MacDonald's adaptive skill that from a plaster stereotype of a horse he was able to make such a powerful horse drawing.

The rectangular text forms the foreground base, or "plinth" in this design, as in Canada and the Call. (Plate

86) Above it, astride a powerful black horse, a classical female figure, crowned with a laurel wreath, and with Canada's coat of arms incorporated into her clothing, holds aloft the Union Jack. A number of drawings in MacDonald's 1915-1922 sketchbook are of a Union Jack and drapery, (Plate 89) drapery, (Plate 90) a Union Jack (Plate 91) and also hands, a pole and drapery (Plate 92) and it is felt that these drawings, in addition to that of the horse, all relate to the design of this 1919 programme-cover and poster.

In the design itself, the vertical horse and rider are flanked by a standing soldier, wearing his helmet, in marked contrast to the identical flat-capped soldiers who represent the army in MacDonald's poster for the Patriotic Fund. The horse's right leg is poised to trample the military helmet, iron cross and other German military symbols, the diagonals of which fill the bottom right corner above the text. The left bottom corner is filled by the soldier's booted foot and the diagonal of his rifle. These bottom corner diagonals close off and consolidate the space occupied by the horse and its rider and the standing soldier and by the use of a perspectively receding Classical tiled floor, some illusion of recession is achieved. However, as in his design for the title page of Legends of Vancouver, (Plate 44) to which this design concept is closely related, the space actually

occupied by the major components of the design is ambiguous. Its content, like that of Canada and the Call (Plate 86) is closely allied to that of posters produced by The Toronto Lithography Co. at the turn of the century, (Plate 4) a combination of classical symbols in a factual modern setting.⁶¹

Only the major frontal components exhibit three dimensionality in MacDonald's design, the horse, its rider and the soldier and there are inconsistencies in the placement of these central figures. The front half of the horse is pushed back so that its hind quarters do not convincingly exist above what are impossible positions for three of its legs. MacDonald's conception is obviously that of a classical sculpture, high on a plinth overlooking a city depicted far below, an example of his use of the Toronto Lithography Company's formula. The middle ground between this elevated scene and the city is blocked off by war paraphernalia behind the closely grouped horse's legs, while any aerial spatial recession is blocked by an aeroplane placed between the flags which block off diagonally both upper corners. The frontal portions of the central figures are thus forced forward into space, giving them a semblance of three dimensionality in that space while their rear

portions are compressed and flattened.

MacDonald's poster, Belgium, (Plate 14) of 1915 is a much less complicated design than Canada and the Call (Plate 86) and Victory Year (Plate 87) and is much more successful. Executed in oil on board, it is referred to by some sources as a painting, a cartoon or a poster though its qualities are far more graphic than painterly. Very little detail is shown and broad areas of heightened unnatural colour are outlined in black.

The poster successfully portrays a mood of sadness and foreboding which epitomises MacDonald's personal hatred of war and his condemnation of Germany's aggression. Its style shows a sinuous Art Nouveau linearity. Belgium is represented by the torso of a sorrowing female figure, looking down in despair on her inundated land and overshadowed by a disproportionately large black Prussian eagle. Belgium's heavy classical figure stands on high ground in the bottom right hand corner of the immediate foreground. Behind her is the last remnant of verdant growth, its green in contrast to the dominant mauves, blacks and browns. To her right, overhung and dominated by massive dark clouds, lie flat, flooded lands, divided horizontally by bands of stark trees and stretches of water. The leafless, broken branches of the tree beside which Belgium stands and in which the eagle roosts reach diagonally across the scene,

offsetting the vertical mass of the woman and the growth behind her. The branches form a pattern against the background cloud, which is a backdrop for the menacing black shape of the bird of prey. The eagle's talons have shredded the bark from the branches on which it roosts, and dangling shreds of bark form a link between the vertical of Belgium's torso and the vertical of the main branch of the tree above her. The symbolism of the content of Belgium is simple and appropriate and the success of this design is based upon MacDonald's use of colour, divided into heavily outlined patterns.

Two undated pages in MacDonald's 1915-1922 sketchbook, . Plates XVII and XVIII, (Plates 18, 76) contain seven preliminary drawings for a special wartime store display for the Robert Simpson Company on the theme "Capitals of the Allies," designed,⁶⁵ completed and installed in December 1915. While at Grip Limited, MacDonald had worked on this Simpson's Christmas window and store displays and, even after leaving Grip Limited, he retained the annual commission for which he was paid \$150.00. A 1916 design required nearly three thousand square feet of painted designs and about fifty little figures with moveable limbs, all completed, with Thoreau's help, in two weeks. Despite the fact that MacDonald wrote that this 1916 production had taken "most of my waking time and a good deal of my sleeping time, too"⁶⁶

he was evidently delighted with its success. The completed presentation included coloured lighting, a working windmill and waterfall and a scenario delivered by an actress. The scenario,⁶⁷ Mother Goose's Village, was written for MacDonald by his friend Roy Mitchell.

The drawings of a plaster horse in his 1915-1922 sketchbook (Plate 93) were the basis of designs for The Rebel, the University of Toronto Magazine and for a bookplate for Augustus Bridle. MacDonald's decision to use different views of a stereotyped small plaster horse as his model for these designs and his "Victory Year" programme-cover/poster (Plate 87) rather than drawing from life in his predominantly farming neighbourhood demonstrates the dominance of his eclectic commercial work habits, unchanged since his already documented 1897 search for a human stereotype to adapt and use for a label.

"MacDonald worked as a designer all his life but made only about 20 bookplates."⁶⁸ In the MacCallum bookplate (Plate 94) a Georgian Bay scene seen through a screen of foliage and trees, an illusion of recession is established by the diminished scale of the distant shoreline and the flying geese in the midground. The iconography establishes an undeniably Canadian content with the exposed rocks of the Canadian Shield and the seven wild geese flying above them. Other details in this design for an ophthalmologist who

funded members of the Group include an iris (part of the eye's structure) and a fat fish hooked to a typical Group of Seven twisted conifer linked vertically to the seven wild geese. While this design shows such art nouveau influences as the screen effect, the curvilinear line and luxuriant foliage, its dominant features are its depth of vision and MacDonald's wit.

The Roman lettering on the Hart House bookplate (Plate 95) is suitably free, light and elegant, appropriately classical in feeling compared to the lettering and style of the MacCallum bookplate (Plate 94) while the stark contrast of the rich black of the heavy Roman lettering with its pure white background on the Dalhousie College Library bookplate (Plate 96) makes it shine in its solidly textured setting. The format is a "light" version of the Kelmscott style, and indeed, the shield motif is a direct transfer of a motif in the "Froissart" specimen page (Plate 60).

Other bookplates by MacDonald show the influence of Japanese prints, as in the Iris motif, its stylization and the patterning used in MacDonald's design for Doris Huestis Mills (Plate 97). A bookplate designed for William Lawson Grant (Plate 98) is a tongue-in-cheek parody of a heavily ornamented Kelmscott page. Its border is made up of Canadian, French and Scotch motifs and incorporates coats of arms and medallion heads, one a negro. Its text is enclosed

in a Greek key pattern. Another bookplate for The Arts and Letters Club (Plate 99) relates to MacDonald's decoration for the Ryerson Chap-Book cover. (Plate 81) The Roman lettering on this bookplate uses fleuron fillers to solidify its text as in the Thomson plaque, (Plate 36) as does the lettering on other Kelmscott style bookplates. The unprinted bookplate MacDonald designed for Joan Macdonald (Plate 100) in 1900 shows a little square house overwhelmed by the black richness and beauty of a line of "Group of Seven" trees crossing it diagonally. The two windows of the house are framed differently, producing two different forms of a cross and the -image is bound at each corner with the banded phrases "My home," "My Books," "My Friends," and "My world." The symbolism, whether conscious or unconscious on MacDonald's part, makes clear that two different Christian philosophies occupy the house, while the captions themselves give insight into Joan MacDonald's personality. MacDonald's wit is sly, as shown here and in the MacCallum bookplate (Plate 94).

Closely related to MacDonald's bookplate designs are the 1924⁶⁹ (Plate 101) and 1925⁷⁰ (Plate 102) catalogue covers designed for the Canadian Sections of the British Empire Exhibitions and also the catalogue cover for a 1927⁷¹ exhibition of Canadian painting held in Paris (Plate 103). These exhibitions were sponsored by the Canadian Government and arranged by Eric Brown of the National Gallery, who presumably gave MacDonald the catalogue cover

commissions. The small, flat, logo-like, centrally balanced design for the 1924 catalogue (Plate 101) was, the following year, replaced by an asymmetrical linear rendition (Plate 102) of the MacCallum Bookplate, (Plate 94) the Canadian Shield now hidden by two Canadian shields with heraldic devices. This cover has realistic recession into space and is airy and "light." The cover (Plate 103) for the 1927 French exhibition is a large elaboration of the 1925 catalogue's logo, (Plate 102) a central highly stylized tree dividing the space into two balanced halves, in which the tonalities are also equally balanced.

In MacDonald's book and bookplate designs, as in these catalogue covers, motifs are used repetitively and the designs themselves follow the formula used in his 1909 Canadian Northern Steamships Limited poster. (Plate 74) Although lack of time and MacDonald's basic conservatism contributed to it, this repetition was undoubtedly due to work habits acquired at Grip Limited.

This "innate British conservatism" in MacDonald is referred to by Ainslie⁷² who nonetheless places him among the group of artists through whose commitment "block printing was established in this country [Canada] as a viable artist's medium."⁷³

The antecedents of the medium would have been attractive

to MacDonald, for "block printing was closely associated with high quality illustrated books from private presses which had taken their lead from William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement."⁷⁴ The technique itself required simple, bold lines and the elimination of detail and deep recession into space, though it was eminently suitable for textural effects, especially when linoleum was the medium.

The replacement of wood by linoleum, a cheap, readily available product of industrialisation, was pioneered by an Austrian Arts and Crafts adherent, Franz Cizek. Cizek's innovations in the teaching of art to children, including the use of linoleum for block printing, were well known to Lismer, whose own Children's Art Centre in Canada was based on Cizek's ideas.⁷⁵

Whether or not MacDonald's use of linoleum derived from this connection cannot be ascertained. The lino-cut "appeared in the Ontario College of Art Prospectus as early as 1920 as part of the Design and Applied Art Course"⁷⁶ taught part-time by MacDonald since 1917 and full time commencing in 1921. Certainly, in Canada "the earliest known black and white artist's print in linoleum, Beaver Pond, Algoma [Plate 35] by J.E.H. MacDonald shows the characteristics of the medium well."⁷⁷

MacDonald's use of the medium took advantage of its

textural possibilities and the print, designed according to his usual formula of horizontals and verticals softened by a foreground diagonal, is enlivened by its varied surface. Although only one other Group member, Carmichael, made block prints, "the influence of the original Group extended to printmaking."⁷⁸

In 1925 Rous and Mann published a portfolio of twenty signed prints and drawings by members of the Group of Seven. The portfolio was displayed at their January 1925 show where, in addition to paintings, Thoreau MacDonald noted "They have one room of Black & Whites."⁷⁹ An undated etching by MacDonald, Georgian Bay Island, (Plate 11) with its airy, unlimited space and simplicity, has little relationship to an ink and wash drawing of similar content A Breezy Shore. (Plate 25) Two other signed but undated etchings are known, one of the Laurentians, from September, 1913.

There was another major change in MacDonald's style in the 1920's, attributable to his architectural commissions, for now he "placed his main emphasis on the basic, monumental structure of nature, which gave further expression to his early interest in design."⁸⁰

A first minor architectural project was the decoration of the University College Common Room which included "two

very excellent caricature portraits.⁸¹ The scale of the Hart House decoration is not known but wall panels commissioned by Dr. James MacCallum in the Fall of 1915 were over five feet high. The commission was given to MacDonald and his friends and was organized by him as a "co-operative" work. MacDonald's careful craftsmanship is shown by his preliminary installation plan, with its meticulous measurements, including those of the stud locations, and a drawing of the fireplace on each side of which two of his own works were to be placed. These large panels, the most important in the group, depicted past and present inhabitants of Go-Home Bay, the site of the MacCallum summer cottage where they were to be installed. MacDonald painted a narrative scene of a Huron Indian and his child, a Jesuit priest and an explorer, possibly Champlain, for one side of the fireplace and, for the other, he painted their successors, a hunter, a fisherman and a lumberjack, for whom the model was Tom Thomson.

Panels by MacDonald over the windows have modern subject matter, the arrival of the supply boat (Plate 16) and the activities of summer visitors, boating, swimming and sketching, the model for the artist being A.Y. Jackson (Plate 15). MacDonald also completed a number of richly coloured smaller decorative panels, leaves and branches (Plate 17) reduced to an interlocking pattern based on line and colour,

related to similar panels contributed by Thomson. The resulting "almost barbaric riot of colour"⁸² was favourably reviewed in The Canadian Courier but "the result was closer in style to their commercial art work, and revealed the extent to which they were aware of Art Nouveau techniques."⁸³

Another large decorative panel completed in 1923 was MacDonald's prize-winning design for a work representing "The Settlement of Canada," designed for but never installed in a specific location in the Parliament buildings in Ottawa.⁸⁴ MacDonald and Varley were among the six finalists who exhibited full size panels at the Canadian National Exhibition that Summer, where MacDonald was awarded first prize for his A Friendly Meeting, Early Canada. The subject matter duplicates that of his Inhabitants of Go-Home Bay, Times Past and he again depicted an Indian, a priest and an explorer.

MacDonald would have completed this prizewinning design just prior to commencing work on his most important architectural commission, the interior decoration of St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto. St. Anne's had been built in 1908 to Ford Howland's design and its minister, Rev. Lawrence Skey, first met MacDonald at the Arts & Letters Club, of which they were both members. For a number of years

they met and discussed the Church project as an opportunity "to mark the birth of a real native Canadian decorative art."⁸⁵ Years later, in 1923, the project became a reality and in April, 1923, MacDonald was appointed sole designer in charge of decorations in collaboration with the architect, William Rae (1867-1957). Both Rae and MacDonald were guided in their work by recommendations from the English architect, Sir Charles Nicholson.

MacDonald filled two notebooks⁸⁶ with his research on Byzantine architecture and church decoration, for this was the style chosen by Rev. Skey for the project, intended to symbolize a return to the church's early origins rather than a continuation of conventions acquired since the 4th century. Thoreau MacDonald noted that "Father talks of Michaelangelo & Madonnas & Prophets etc. most of the time."⁸⁷ The project attracted a good deal of attention, The Toronto Star Weekly headlining its coverage with "Lawrence Skey's Bysantine [sic] Defiance A Triumph of Toronto Artists"⁸⁸ while the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1925 published an article by MacDonald on his work.⁸⁹

This architectural commission was imbued with personal and philosophical symbolism for MacDonald, who saw the project itself, the interior decoration, as representative of "inner religious vitality," while the "flat treatment and

strong simple colouring" of the Byzantine style demonstrated both a physical and spiritual link to the age of Constantine.⁹⁰ This style also had close affinities with the flat, colourful depictions of the Canadian landscape which were the basis of the work of MacDonald and the Group of Seven. The philosophic ancestry of both Transcendentalism and Theosophy originated in the East, and these philosophies were concerned with the reconciliation of East and West. In this regard, it is interesting to note of one of the major influences on MacDonald, William Morris, that "his analysis of the sources of Byzantine ornament and the interaction of East and west is especially striking."⁹¹

Again following co-operative workshop precedents set by Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement, as he had with the MacCallum commission, MacDonald sublet portions of his design to his friends. In addition to the over-all design, (Plate 26) MacDonald completed three major works himself, The Tempest, (Plate 27) The Transfiguration (Plate 28) and The Crucifixion (Plate 29) and supervised the other artists, eight painters and two sculptors, among them Varley and Carmichael.

The basic function of the decorations, completed between July and December, 1923, was to define and improve the architecture of the church, stressing its fourth century Byzantine origins rather than follow conventions that by the

19th century were "dwarfing and debasing and mechanizing the great original inspiration."⁹²

Great emphasis was placed in MacDonald's design on the dome, St. Anne's most Byzantine feature, and "one of the great aims of the decoration [was] to increase the sense of height of the dome, and to bring out its form." "Certain early conventions of Christian Art were [therefore] adopted as they were thought to be more in harmony with the evangelical character of the church congregation than later pictorial developments."⁹³

In MacDonald's design, "the subjects are so arranged as to bring out the idea of the divinity of Christ, the Saviour, Lord and King"⁹⁴ and the cycle begins and ends with two of the four colossal pendentive paintings, fifteen feet wide and ten feet high, Varley's Nativity and MacDonald's Crucifixion.

An intricate symbolism of motif and colour was used in the dome decoration, and motifs depicted in white on its red background included the sun and star emblems, consistently used by MacDonald in his applied art, the shield of David, and old Byzantine cross devices, including the swastika also used by him previously.

Three-dimensional symbols of the four New Testament Evangelists were so placed as to interact appropriately with

the symbols in the dome and also with renderings of four Old Testament prophets. The whole dome programme was unified by an encircling text designed by MacDonald in "strong Classic fourteen inch Roman letters in gold leaf"⁹⁵, just as the water line around the walls of the MacCallum cottage unified the mural installation.

In order to relate different portions of a design, the title page, decorations and cover of a book, for instance, MacDonald used repetitive decorative motifs of symbolic significance. In St. Anne's "a panel design of lilies in gold and yellow white on green is repeated in the design."⁹⁶ Another design device used by MacDonald to give cohesion to disparate elements in a design was over-all tonality, as in his lettering designs. In St. Anne's church the same device was employed, all artists using a common source of paint. MacDonald's very precise notes on the colours used in the St. Anne decoration scheme are similar to the notes on colour jotted throughout his papers. Such an approach is essentially that of a craftsman, and shows a primary concern with material and its application (or duplication) rather than with a conception.

MacDonald's chancel works, The Tempest (Plate 27) and The Transfiguration (Plate 28) are closely related in content and form, both dominated by a central static Christ figure, Zeus-like in The Tempest, (Plate 27) poised to hurl

thunderbolts and in The Transfiguration (Plate 28) confirming his Glory to his Apostles. The content of MacDonald's large pendentive painting, The Crucifixion (Plate 29) echoes the wedge-shape of its site, the horizontal of the cross being extended and its vertical shortened.

On completion of the St. Anne commission, MacDonald "quit the work with more regret than pleasure," feeling that the exigencies of time and money had left "vacancies" in the design.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, "MacDonald was growing more confident of his abilities. Everything he undertook now bore a mark of distinction."⁹⁸

In 1928, MacDonald was awarded two more architectural commissions by the Toronto architects Baldwin & Green, one of whom, Martin Baldwin, had worked with William Rae on the St. Anne commission⁹⁹ and later was a director of the Art Gallery of Ontario.

One of the projects was a design for the decoration of the foyer of the nineteen-storey Concourse building in Toronto, in which MacDonald used Byzantine elements, such as "gold & colour decoration at the top & inside, mosaics."¹⁰⁰ These mosaic designs incorporated the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water gathered together (hence the "Concourse" of the building's name). For the decoration of the ceiling, in gold, MacDonald used Canadian

flora and fauna motifs, including deer, fish and wild ducks. Further Canadian content was provided by "quotations from Canadian poets for the people to read while they wait for elevators."¹⁰¹ This commission was also the subject of a published article, its headline proclaiming "City of Future Brilliant with Gold and Colour."¹⁰²

The second commission was for a decorative scheme for the lounge of "The Claridge," (Plate 31) a Toronto apartment building, for which MacDonald's design was "highly geometric in concept and bright in colour, featuring red, blue and gold on a cream ground" [and incorporated] "the signs of the zodiac and a series of banded patterns in the ceiling beams."¹⁰³

In these two secular commissions, MacDonald utilized the new style and techniques he had acquired in completing the St. Anne commission. He used the same combination of colours in the Concourse building as in the church, reversing them, and using dark on light. In the church commission, the backgrounds to the chancel paintings are "in painted gold, lined with Venetian Red, suggesting the mosaic of the ancient work."¹⁰⁴ but in the 1924 Concourse Building MacDonald designed with real, not illusionistic mosaics and supervised their installation by Italian craftsmen.

In 1931, MacDonald was the author of "Art," a chapter in

Trails to Success,¹⁰⁵ a collection of essays by successful practitioners of various professions in Canada, aimed at assisting young men in the choice of a career.

In his essay, MacDonald discusses art-related work opportunities in Canada and his reference to the availability of work in such Arts and Crafts related media as textiles, furniture, leather work and decorative painting on objects, demonstrated the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement in Canada. MacDonald himself is known to have worked in a number of such media. Both his own father and his father-in-law were cabinet makers and while no documentation can be found for MacDonald having made or decorated his own "quaint" furniture, a knowledge of carpentry is shown by his installation plan for the MacCallum murals and a certain prowess is shown in woodwork in the picture frames he designed (Plates 21, 22) and in some cases executed.

MacDonald was well conversant with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood whose unofficial member, Ford Madox Brown, "designed his own frames." Rossetti, Hunt, Arthur Hughes and others of the circle also designed their own frames; but it seems as if Brown was the true innovator.¹⁰⁶ Holman Hunt "tried to use such motifs as would not just adorn, but would relate the frame to the theme of the painting" and in one design used "curiously pantheistic symbols in its rising sun, fish, frogs, flowers, plants and birds."¹⁰⁷ MacDonald's

Wild Ducks, (Plate 104) for which he designed and executed the frame, is dated 1917, so that, in addition to the example of the Pre-Raphaelites, the influence also of the hand-crafted frames of the Scandinavian painters, seen by MacDonald at their 1913 Buffalo show, must also be considered. The Studio also published many reproductions of paintings with specially designed frames accompanying its articles on Scandinavian art.

It is also known that MacDonald worked in wrought-iron, and designed "a delicately attractive wrought-iron support and painted for it an exterior hanging sign designating Boys & Girls' House,"¹⁰⁸ neither of which is now extant.

Members of the Group, MacDonald presumably among them, also "made a series of Christmas cards that were most successful. They were sold not only in Canada; orders came from New York, and even from Liberty's in London,"¹⁰⁹ but no known examples exist.

MacDonald also worked in stained glass and a jotting in one of his notebooks seems to refer to the price of glass of different colours. A 1924 newspaper article refers to MacDonald as "still designing coloured glass windows"¹¹⁰ and a reference to MacDonald's working in this medium was made in The Studio.¹¹¹ MacDonald displays knowledge of the medium in his discussion of the reasons for changing the

window glass in St. Anne's church¹¹² but no documentation exists of any of his work. Stained glass, two-dimensional, juxtaposing areas of colour to form a stylized pattern within a linear framework, would have been closely related in style to MacDonald's paintings, for instance, Church by the Sea (Plate 105) of 1922.

MacDonald probably worked in a number of other areas as yet undiscovered, possibly copper enamelling, for example, used in his commission for the National Trust plaque. Lismer states that MacDonald designed "War memorials, [and] coins of the realm"¹¹³ but it has not been possible to document these media or his known interest in weaving.

In all the media in which MacDonald worked, "his development followed along certain phases, taking up new ones, developing and casting off others, almost continuously."¹¹⁴ Certain traits associated with commercial habits of work that had occupied the greater part of his life were constant and the eclecticism with which MacDonald adopted every new phase from Europe can be attributed to such habits, as can the lack of a unified style in his commercial work, his fine art or his poetry. The only exception was his "Algoma" period, where the unique forms of the Canadian Shield were particularly suited to the commercial Art Nouveau style and to MacDonald's lyrical expression of his

transcendentalist reverence for the North. And, of course, he was a member of a group, benefitting from the encouragement and example of his peers.

He toiled for beauty but he lost
In littered desks and rooms of care.... 115

NOTES

Chapter IV

Analysis of Commercial Work

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Chapter V

Conclusion

The main purpose of this thesis has been to examine and establish the relationship between MacDonald's commercial production in applied or low art and his fine or high art, painting, and to show that the tie that binds and unifies such opposing elements is his transcendentalist philosophy as expressed in the poetry he wrote throughout his life.

Although the anti-industrial movements begun by Ruskin and Morris lessened the gap between high and low art, and their successors in the Arts and Crafts Movement gave credence to the concept of the "artist/craftsman," the nineteenth century view of the mutual exclusivity of low and high art persisted into the twentieth century. Despite the success of his career as an "artist/craftsman" and his demonstrated adherence to the Arts and Crafts Movement's principles, MacDonald himself continued to consider that the functionality of applied art made it inferior to fine art, "done for itself alone."¹ This hierarchical view MacDonald

extended also to his poetry and used different levels of language, ranging from colloquial to elevated, according to his subject matter. The illogicality of such an hierarchical view in an artist/craftsman has already been noted.

The mutual exclusivity of applied and fine art was responsible for the revival of print-making at the end of the nineteenth century. It was not until advances in technology had eliminated the use of block printing in commercial reproduction that the medium was considered suitable for use by artists. Despite, however, the ensuing prolific production of block prints by many established Canadian artists, including MacDonald, between 1910 and the 1930's, their prints, until recently, "were as a rule rarely considered even in comprehensive monographs of their work."²

It may be that remnants of nineteenth century exclusivity underlie both this omission and the failure of most published sources, even when not precluded from doing so by their theses, to make any but slight reference to MacDonald's applied art. Ironically, such cursory references often hint at the importance of MacDonald's commercial experience to his fine art. "His innate discipline and long design training would have preserved him from any risk of emptiness,"³ states Duval, discussing MacDonald's designs for the MacCallum mural commission.

MacDonald's adversaries, however, and even at times his supporters, showed no hesitation in relating his applied art to his fine art. The journalist Hector Charlesworth (1872-1945), appointed associate editor of Saturday Night in 1910, consistently opposed the increasing recognition given MacDonald and the Group of Seven. Charlesworth was aligned with members of the Royal Canadian Academy, practitioners of high art, and it seems reasonable to presume that the intensity of his and their reaction to MacDonald and the Group of Seven had, as at least partial cause, the unresolved relationship of applied art to the fine art they espoused.

In his art review in 1916,⁴ Charlesworth had raged at the "applied or quasi-'futurism'" of the O.S.A. exhibition he was reviewing, naming MacDonald as the chief offender, guilty of vaudeville attention-getting tactics in trying to "hit 'em in the eye." Charlesworth stated MacDonald's paintings were more reminiscent of a "drunkard's stomach" or "Hungarian goulash" than art and likened the paintings of the Group to two forms of low applied art, theatrical scenery and posters, both media in which MacDonald had worked. Even Evan Hunter, author in 1940 of an early biography of MacDonald, conceded that some of the artist's paintings were justifiably likened to posters.⁵

A corollary to the main purpose of this thesis has been an examination of the relationship between MacDonald and the Group of Seven and the factors that unified them. A defensive unity among the members of the Group was encouraged by adverse criticism originating with the established Canadian academicians the Group sought to displace. MacDonald's work was singled out for attack, perhaps because he was in many ways the leader of the Group or perhaps because his economic circumstances and personality made him the most vulnerable of them. He lacked Harris' wealth and social poise, Lismer's intellect and Jackson's rugged self-reliance and the resources MacDonald had were dissipated in making a living from predominantly applied rather than fine art.

Similar criticism based on their resemblance to forms of applied art was understandably levelled at the paintings of the Group as a whole, for, as Reid states "All of the members of the group except Harris had a firm training in the business of commercial art, and this undoubtedly led them to strive for qualities of eye-catching design and immediacy of impact,"⁶ both qualities usually associated with well designed advertisements, particularly posters. Harris, too, had commercial art experience when between 1907-1909 he worked as an illustrator for Harper's Bazaar and in 1916 he too had been attacked by Charlesworth, who likened his

painting to a "garish poster," presumably on the basis of a perceived commercial taint. Charlesworth felt that MacDonald had repented of his previous "sanguinary violence" and was "emerging from the strain and stress period."⁷

Such attacks upon them both as individuals and as members of the Group served to reinforce the already strong bonds between them. One unifying factor was their shared commercial experience, out of which had developed what Reid defined as a "tendency toward broad decorative style, with a flattening of the image, a stressing of large, bold forms and an emphasis on colour."⁸ Such a style was eminently suited to depiction of their chosen subject matter, the Northern landscape, which in turn was equally suited to their philosophic ideals and nationalism. For though the Group depicted actual Canadian locations, these locations are accessible only in the mind of the viewer. A viewer's entry is invariably barred by deep and rushing icy water, impenetrable growth, or rocks as in MacDonald's Mount Goodsir, Yoho Park. (Plate 106) Most commonly, as in his 1921 The Solemn Land, (Plate 40) the great height of the viewer's only point of entry into the painting precludes any logical descent to the vistas depicted. Thus, Group of Seven paintings, like the Scandinavian works by Fjaestad and Sohlberg, which so greatly influenced them, are not true depictions of the North, but rather symbols of it. The Group

of Seven has in common with the Northern Symbolists their treatment of the Northern landscape as the symbol of national identity.

That some characteristics of applied art exist in MacDonald's paintings is confirmed by the relationship established in Chapter IV between the form and content of MacDonald's work in all media, applied art, painting and poetry. The same content is found in applied art, oil paintings and poems, as is a basic compositional device made up of a series of horizontals relieved by a dominant vertical. Cosmic motifs, stars and the moon, are consistently used by MacDonald in his work in all media. The same stylistic inconsistencies are as apparent in his poetry as in his art in all media and, as has been shown, were affected by the same influences.

Similarly composed visual imagery is evoked in MacDonald's poetry, a lone tree on a cliff, a telegraph pole by railway tracks, and mood is achieved by strongly contrasting visual images, the equivalents of tonal contrasts in his art.

His poems have been for the most part ignored by published sources and no previous examination of their form or content in relation to his life and work has ever been undertaken. The few published references made to MacDonald's

poetry are cursory and generalized, ignoring the fact that his first dated poem was written in 1899, his poems were included in at least four anthologies of Canadian verse⁹ and that three volumes of his poetry¹⁰ were published, albeit posthumously.

The greater number of MacDonald's poems express his transcendentalist beliefs, which were shared not only by Lismer¹¹ and to a degree by Varley and Harris but by a number of the Group's intimates, such as the Houssers and Roy Mitchell. With an anti-urban bias, transcendentalism's particular promise of solace, renewal and the autonomy of the individual conscience was popular at the turn of the century, when old values were being eroded by increasing industrialisation and urbanization.

The "Confederation" poets also had transcendentalist members in Bliss Carman and Charles G.D. Roberts. The transcendentalist ideals they shared with the Group of Seven in their search for a national identity led both groups to a vision of the Canadian landscape as an infinite, rather than a finite repository of the Canadian spirit and as the means of its renewal. In an early poem of 1900, The Blessing Dawn,¹² MacDonald used the same vision, the finite land offering a harbour in times of storm while its infinite port was safety for the soul. The Canadian landscape is seen by

both groups as a wilderness, awesome in its massive grandeur, and, like MacDonald, the transcendentalist painter, the transcendentalist poet Roberts organizes the colour, texture and shape of the Canadian landscape into broad patterns. This analogy between painting and poetry demonstrates the Yeatsian view "that pattern of line and form in the visual arts (repetition in space) was comparable to rhythm and repeated sounds in poetry (repetition in time)."¹³

It is interesting to note that there is an inherent duality in transcendentalism and that its material and astral states were paralleled in MacDonald's own life. It is a singularly irrational system of beliefs, attempting, illogically, to stress the indivisibility of the concrete and the abstract and at the same time require its adherents to advance from one to the other.

Visually, transcendentalism is composed of horizontal bands, from finite to infinite, through which the soul, when "called" by a form of spiritual consciousness, the "over-soul," moves upward to a higher state. The visual imagery of the rising soul and the bands through which it passes "correspond" directly with MacDonald's most favoured compositional formula of horizontal bands transfixated by a vertical. Furthermore, just as the vertical in MacDonald's composition links the details of the foreground with the infinite space of the background, it forms an analogy to the progression from finite to infinite. The same structure is

consistently used in MacDonald's poetry, in which a vertical links the finite earth with the infinite. In MacDonald's poem of 1902, "Way of the Stars,"¹⁴ a transitory vertical moving through transitory horizontals represents spiritual planes and concrete forms beneath them denote earthly states. As Nancy Robertson states, a dominant vertical and horizontal structure, relieved by a diagonal movement "are the elements of MacDonald's composition throughout his life."¹⁵

A related unifying factor between his work in different media was MacDonald's use of "woven" images, surfaces and structures, this "warp and weft" also symbolising the transcendentalist planes of consciousness through which the ascending "soul" must rise. In MacDonald's finest paintings, the "Algoma" series, the use of a broken brushstroke and its tapestry effect enriched the flat pattern of the landscape and mitigated the commercial techniques underlying his style. The lyrical rhythms express his transcendentalist joy in his first experience of the North and the success of the paintings in this series results from a unique combination of his painterly skills and his spiritual inspiration.

The iconography of MacDonald's art is complemented and augmented by a study of his poetry, the one making the other

explicable, just as his transcendentalism and the persistence of its ideals and motifs illuminates and unites disparate and little known aspects of his work and life.

"I sometimes dream that I might produce something worthy of the pioneer work in which I had a share."¹⁶

NOTES

Conclusion

1 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol. III, File "Lecture III, The Technique of the Early Books and some Books on Lettering, Jan 20, 1922, (MS) p. 1.

2 Patricia Ainslie, Images of the Land: Canadian Block Prints 1919 - 1943 (Calgary: Glenbow/Alberta Institute, 1984) p. 13.

3 Paul Duval, The Tangled Garden: The Art of J.E.H. MacDonald (Scarborough, Ontario: Cerebrus/Prentice-Hall, 1978) p. 60.

4 Hector Charlesworth, "Pictures That Can be Heard," Saturday Night, (March 13, 1916), pp. 5-11.

5 E.R. Hunter, J.E.H. MacDonald: A Biography & Catalogue of his Work (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1940) p. 34.

6 Dennis Reid, The Group of Seven (Ottawa: The National Gallery, 1970) p. 14.

7 Charlesworth, "Good Pictures at O.S.A. Exhibition," Saturday Night, (March 24, 1917), p. 2.

8 Reid, p. 14.

9 John D. Robins, Ed., A Pocketful of Canada (Toronto: Wm. Collins & Co. Canada Ltd., 1946) p. 236.

Bliss Carman, Lorne Pierce & V.B. Rhodenizer, Eds., Canadian Poetry in English (1922; rpt; Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1954) p. 172.

A.J.M. Smith, The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1960) p. 115.

-----, The Book of Canadian Poetry (Toronto: W.J. Gage & Co., Limited, 1943) p. 244.

10 J.E.H. MacDonald, West by East and Other Poems by J.E.H. MacDonald (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1933)
 -----, Village & Fields: A few Country Poems by J.E.H. MacDonald (Thornhill: The Woodchuck Press, 1933)

-----, My high Horse: A Mountain Memory, (Thornhill: The Woodchuck Press, 1934)

11 Reid, p. 20.

12 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol II, File "A-C (1917? [sic] - 1931, n.d." "The Blessing Dawn" n.d.

I tossed on seas of fevered dream,
 All night I tossed, and looked in vain,
 For any clear and friendly beam
 To guide me through the riven main.

Confusion surged, dire visions gleamed,
 With siren call and demon shout;
 And in the lull, when less I dreamed,
 The city bells tolled calmly out.

So wore the night; with many a moan,
 Through drear and formless tumult hurled,
 My soul was cast away alone
 And chaos blotted out the world.

Till when the birds began to cheep,
 And dawn looked whitely through the pane,
 I safely made a port of sleep,
 In music of the falling rain.

13 Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux, Yeats and the Visual Arts (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1986) p. 63.

14 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol II, File "T-Y 1918-1929, n.d." "Way of the Stars" n.d.

The house is under the poplar tree
 The tower overtops the poplar tall
 The cloud floats over them far and free
 And the sweet stars are over all.

Poverty ponders a daily grief
 Care sits by wealth in the lighted hall
 The poplar scatters her blackened leaf
 And the calm stars shine over all.

So we journey the shadowy years
Faintly hearing an upward call
Seeing ever in doubt and tears
The steadfast stars shine over all.

15 Nancy E. Robertson, Introd., J.E.H. MacDonald,
R.C.A., 1873-1932 (Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto,
1965) p. 8.

16 J.E.H. MacDonald Papers, File No. MG 30 D III, Vol I,
File "Letter drafts." The sentence quoted is from
MacDonald's draft of an undated letter addressed to the
Council of the Ontario College of Art.



Plate 1

Wind, Rain and Sunshine - October

J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on canvas, 1910

16" x 20"

Location: private collection

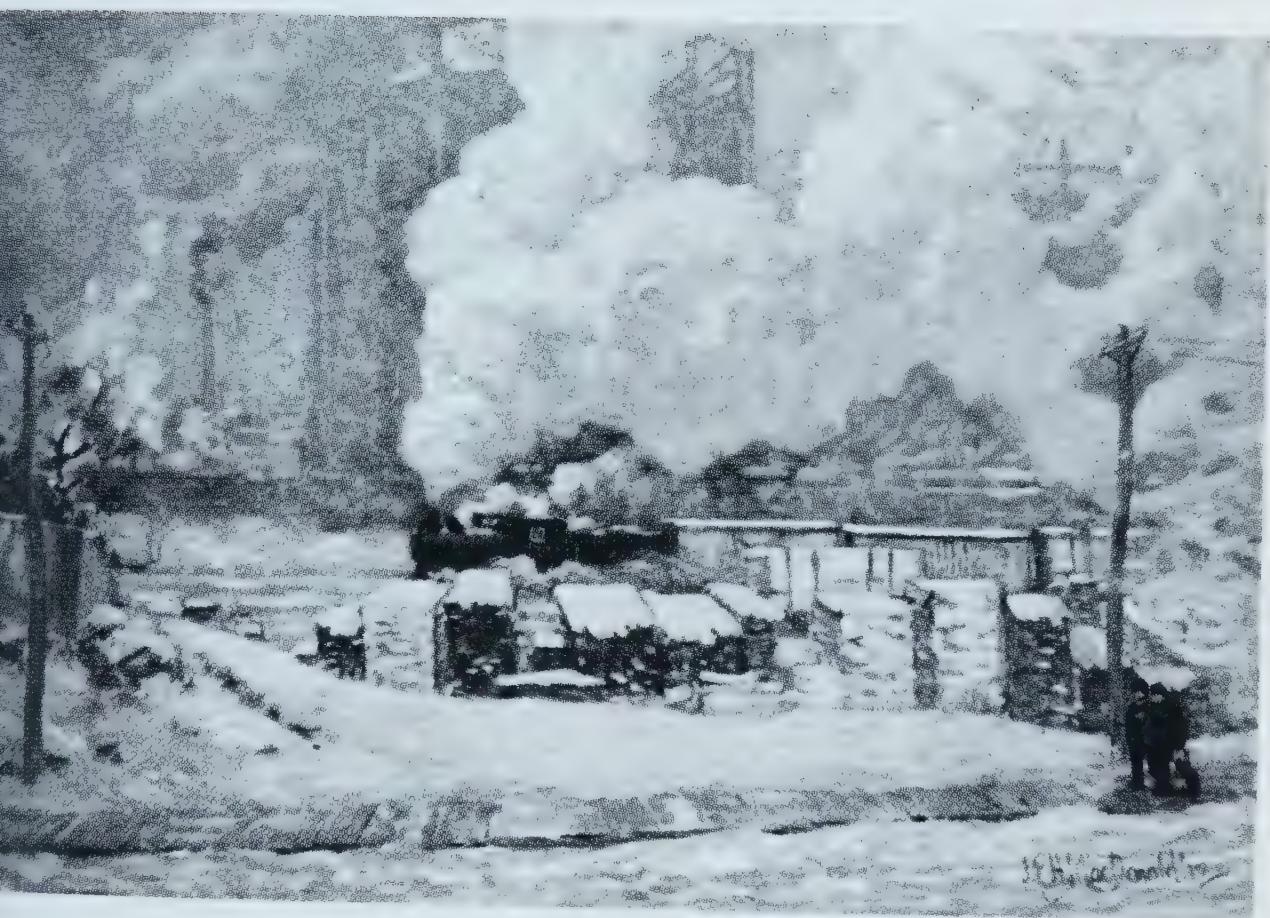


Plate 2

Tracks and Traffic

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1912
28" x 40"

Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario



Plate 3

Victoria College Poster, 1899
designer: J.D. Kelly
Lithograph, 1899
Toronto Lithography Company
Location: Metropolitan Toronto Library



Plate 4

C. N. E. Poster, 1902
Toronto Lithography Company,
Location: University of Toronto



Plate 5

Poster, 1900's
Grip Printing & Publishing Company
Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario
Library, Toronto

We make cover designs that are up to date; in one, two or three colors. Plates that will print on any press.

Grip Ptg. &
Pub. Co. 28-30
Lombard St.
Toronto..



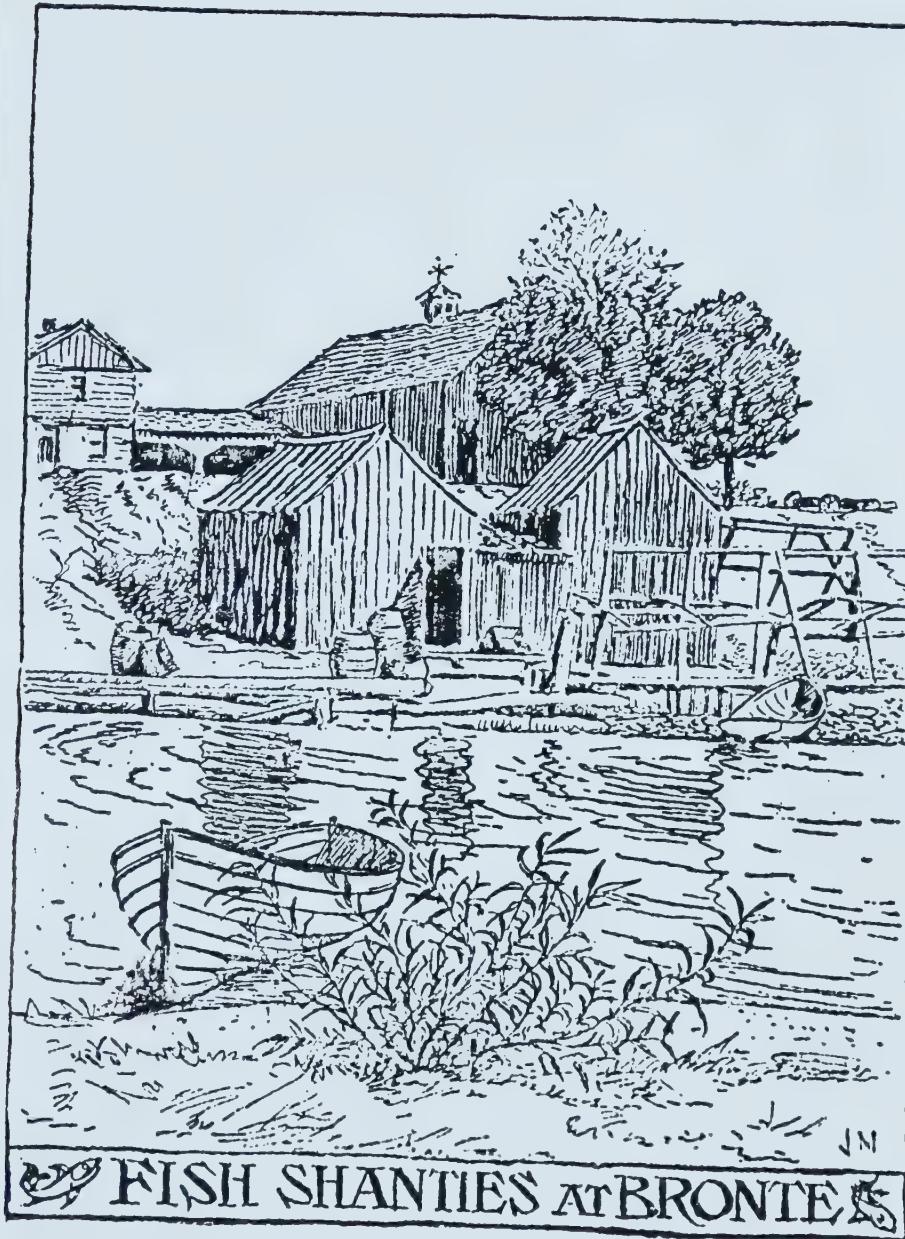
Plate 6

Poster, 1900's

designer: John Conacher

Grip Printing & Publishing Company

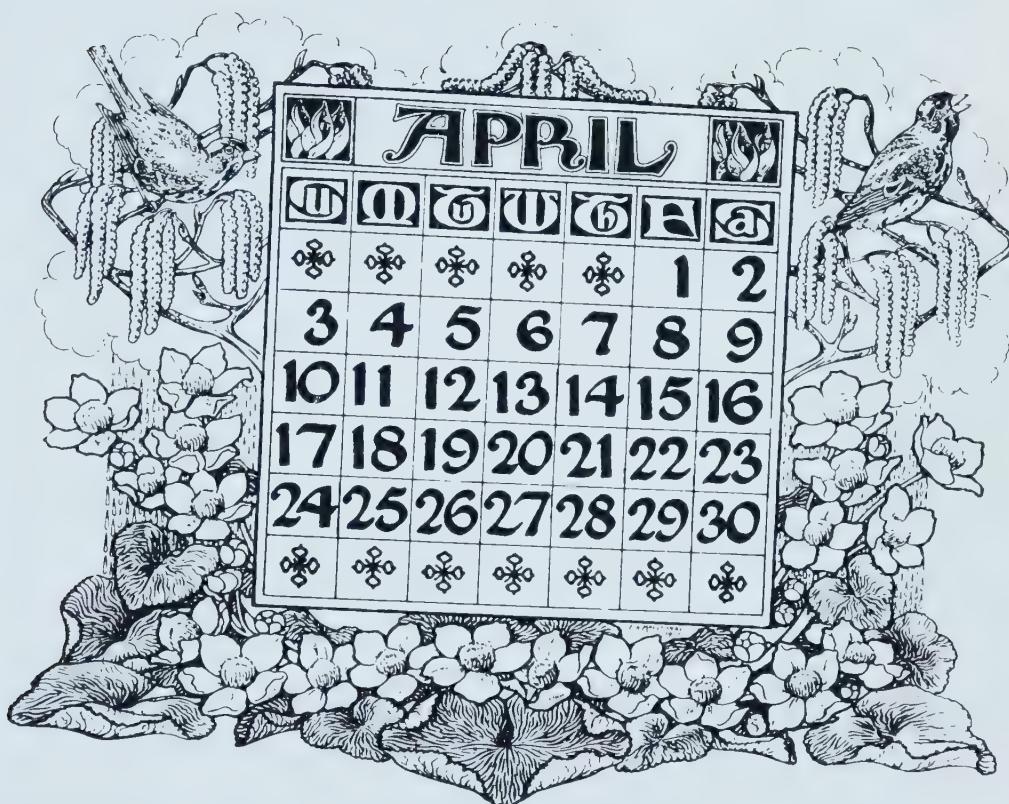
Location: not known (see Stacey, p. x)



A drawing for the Art League Calendar, 1902

Plate 7

Fish Shanties at Bronte
J.E.H. MacDonald
ink drawing, 1902
Location: 1902 Toronto Art Students'
League Calendar



TITLE PAGE 1904 CALENDAR
By J. E. H. MacDonald

Plate 8

Title Page, April, 1904
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: 1904 Toronto Art Students'
League Calendar



Plate 9

October Afternoon, Howard Pond
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1910
24" x 18"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 10

Nova Scotia

J.E.H. MacDonald

Watercolour, 1898

9 3/8" x 5"

Location: The McMichael Conservation
Collection, Kleinburg



Plate 11

Georgian Bay Island

J.E.H. MacDonald

Etching, c. 1913

6 3/8" x 9 3/8"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 12

Early Morning, Rocky Mountains

J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on canvas, 1928

30" x 35"

Location: private collection



Plate 13

March Evening, Northland
J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on canvas, 1914

29 1/2" x 39 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 14

Belgium

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on cardboard, 1915
20 3/4" x 29 1/2"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 15

A.Y. Jackson Sketching
J.E.H. MacDonald
mural, oil on board, 1914-1915
47 3/4" x 25 1/4"
Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

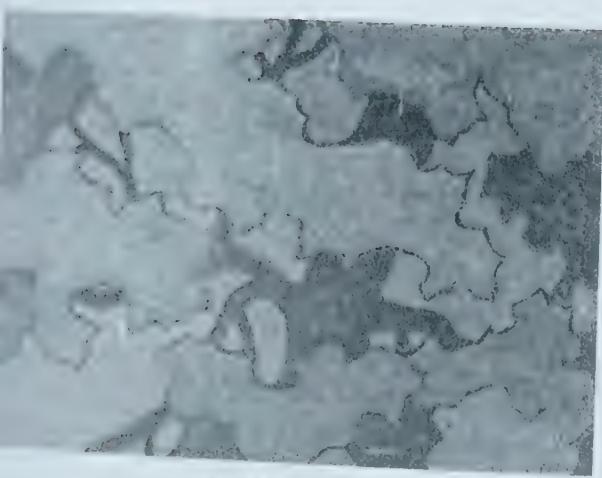


The Supply Boat, Trader, c 1915-16

Plate 16

The Supply Boat "Trader"
J.E.H. MacDonald
mural, oil on board, 1914-1915
48" x 93 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



15a Autumn Maple, c. 1916

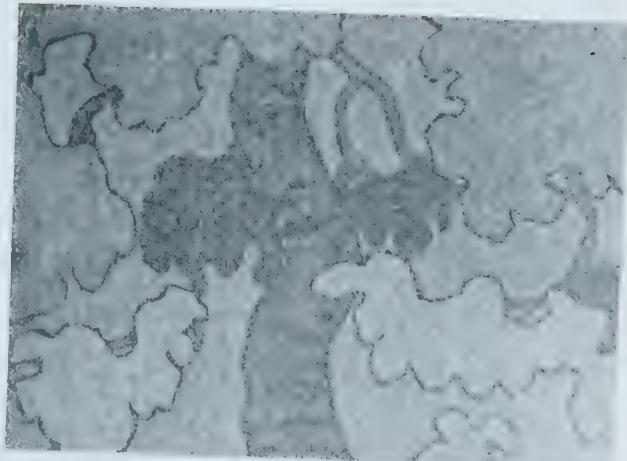


Plate 17

Autumn Maple and Autumn Poplar

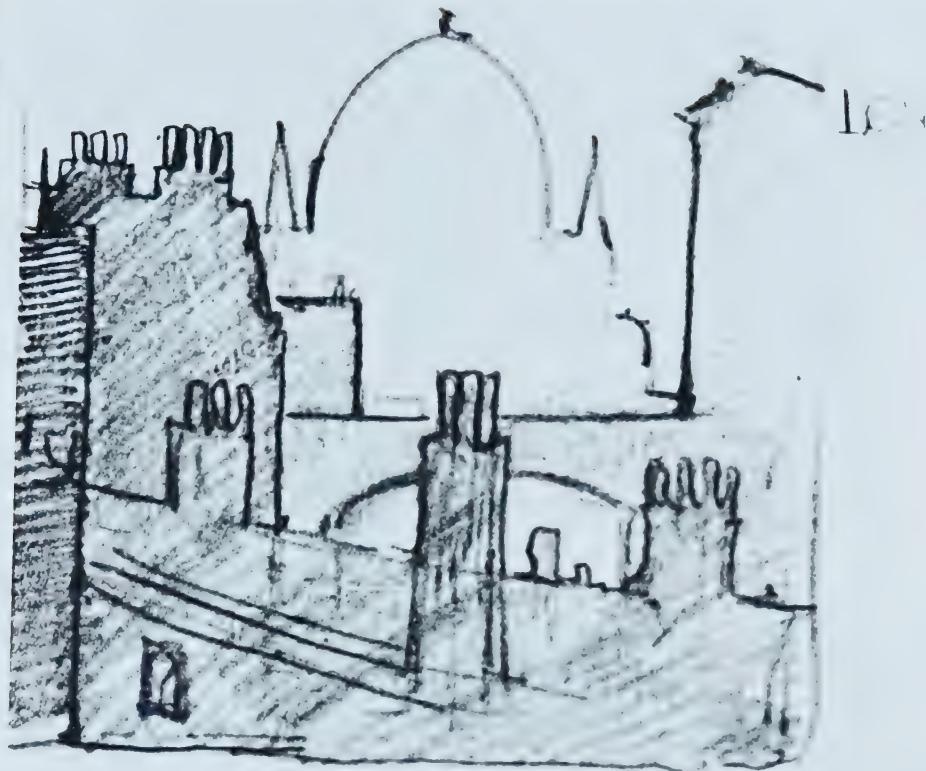
J.E.H. MacDonald

decorative panels,

oil on board, 1914-1915

27 1/8" x 37 1/8" and 8 1/2" x 10 1/2"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



House of Parliament
London Wall. British
Rifles & Chinnings

Parl. of
Commons & War
Program

Plate 18

Capitals of the Allies window display

J.E.H. MacDonald

pencil sketches, 1915

6" x 7 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 19

The Tangled Garden
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on board, 1916
48" x 60"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 20

The Elements
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on board, 1916
28 x 36 1/8"

Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario,
Toronto

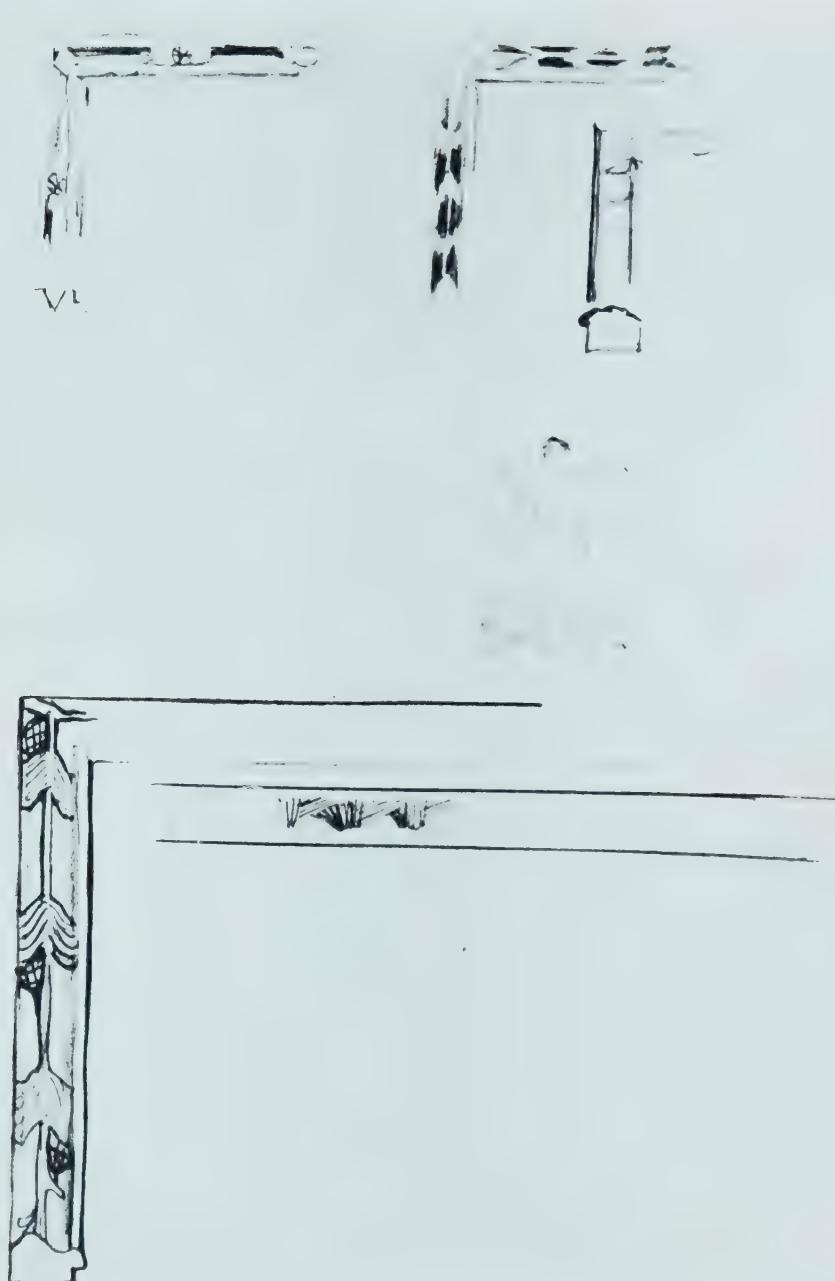


Plate 21

Frame designs
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil sketches, c. 1917
6" x 7 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

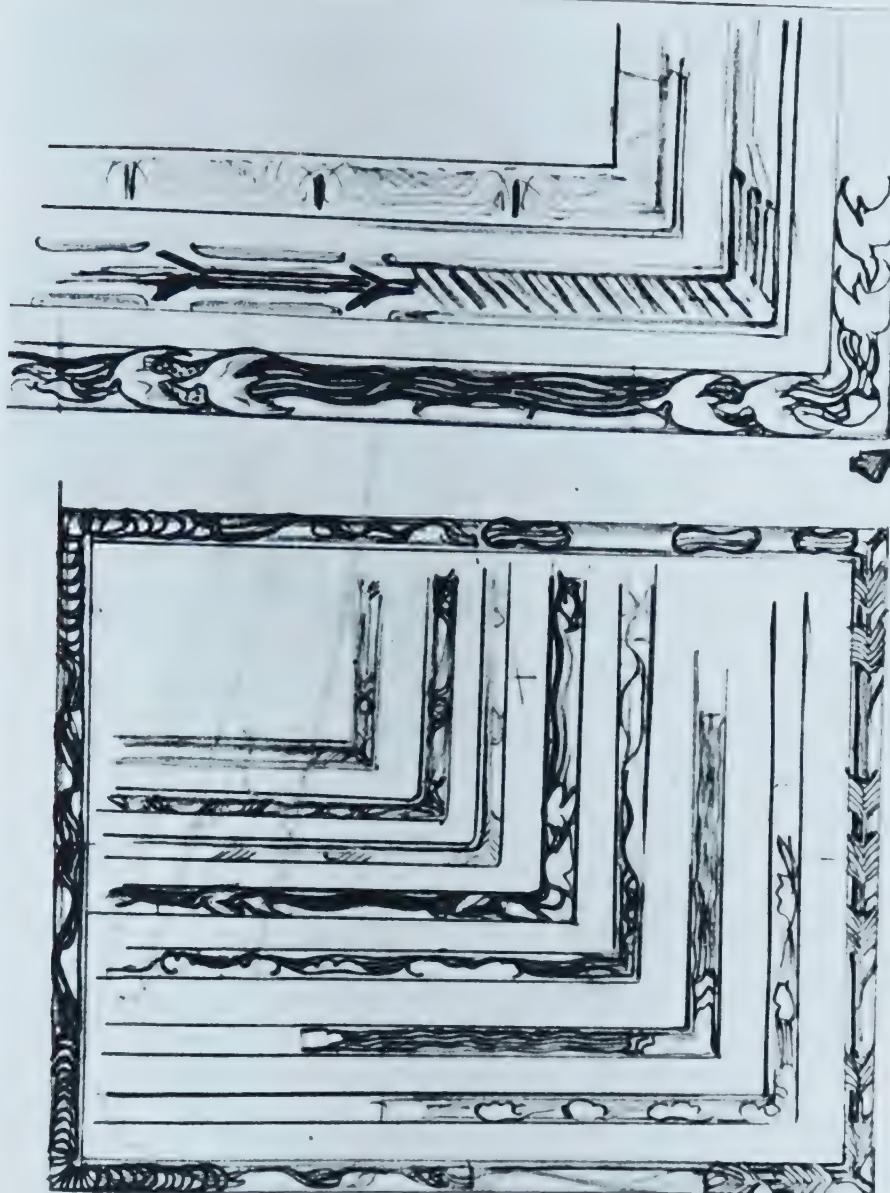


Plate 22

Frame designs
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil sketches, c. 1917
6" x 7 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

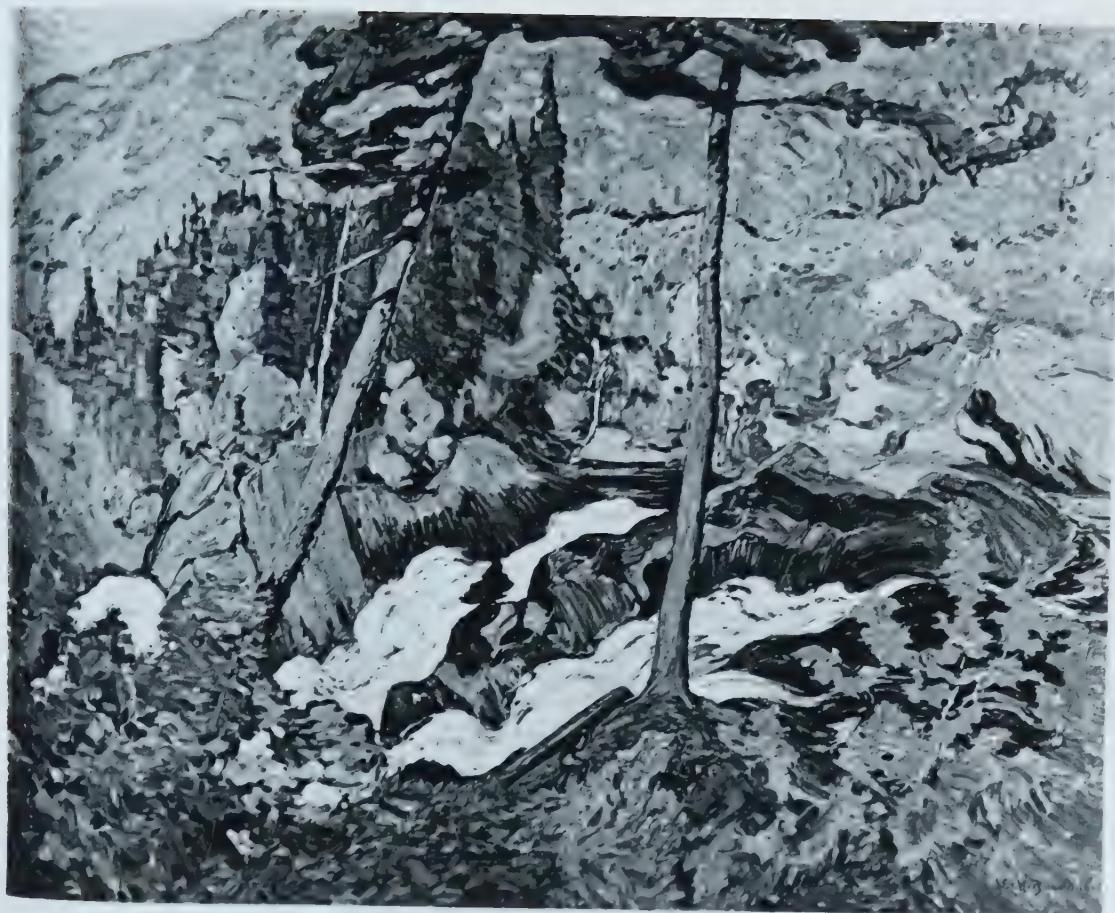


Plate 23

The Wild River
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1919
53" x 64"

Location: The Faculty Club, University
of Toronto



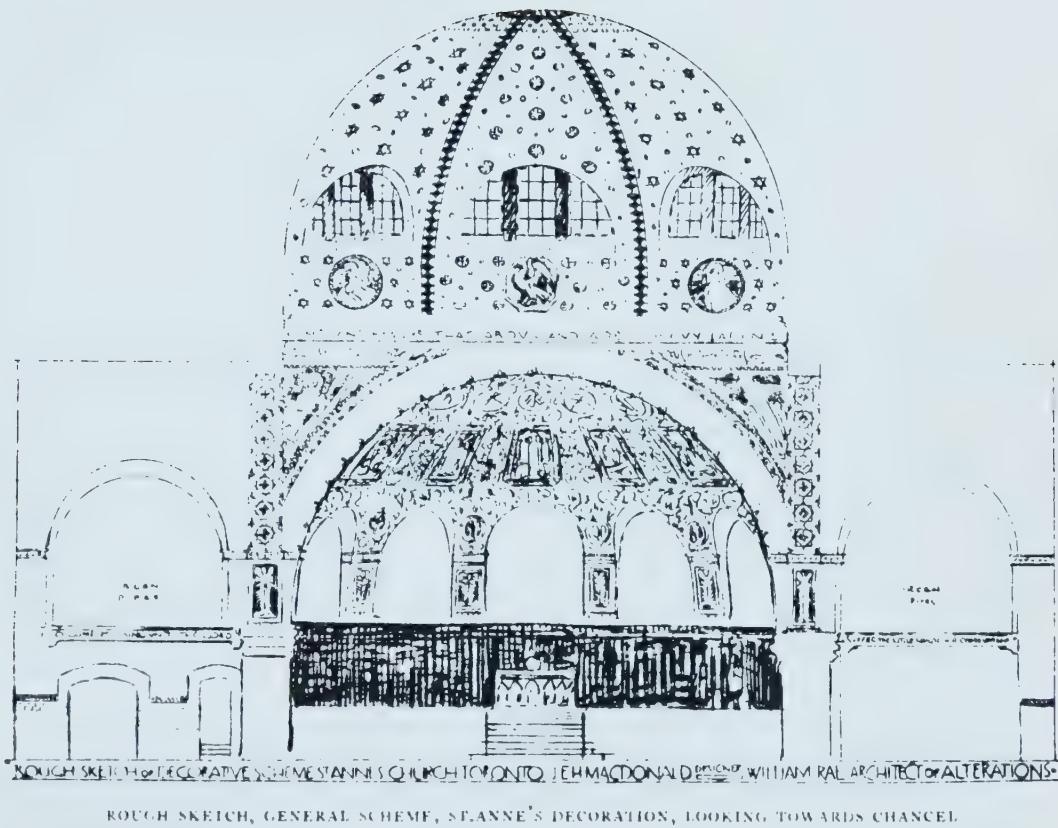
Plate 24

In the Sugar Bush
J.E.H. MacDonald
Brush and Ink Drawing, n.d.,
Location: private collection



Plate 25

A Breezy Shore
J.E.H. MacDonald
Brush and ink drawing, n.d.,
Location: private collection



ROUGH SKETCH, DECORATIVE SCHEME, ST. ANNE'S CHURCH, TORONTO. J.E.H. MACDONALD, DESIGN. WILLIAM RAJ, ARCHITECT OF ALTERATIONS.

ROUGH SKETCH, GENERAL SCHEME, ST. ANNE'S DECORATION, LOOKING TOWARDS CHANCEL.

Plate 26

Rough sketch, General Scheme
Chancel view, completed 1924
St. Anne's Anglican Church decoration
J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: The R.A.I.C. Journal
Vol. II, May/June 1925



Plate 27

The Tempest

J.E.H. MacDonald

Mural, completed 1924

Location: Chancel, St. Anne's Anglican
Church, Gladstone Avenue,
Toronto

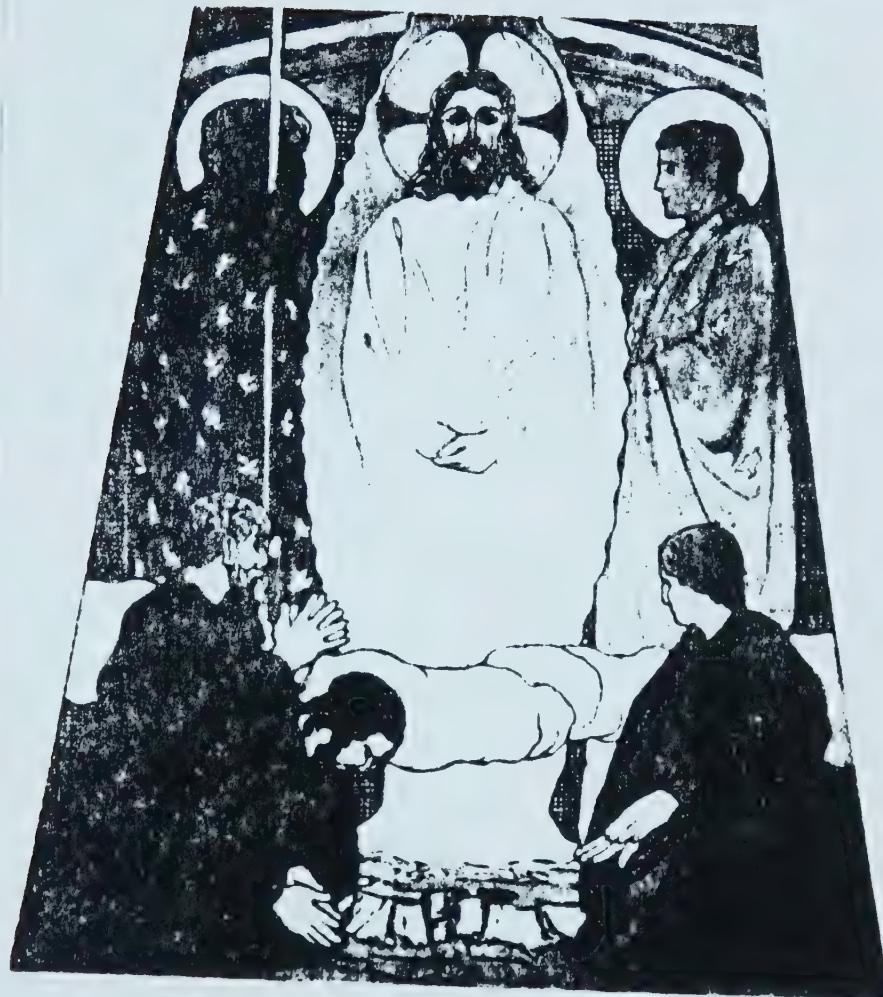


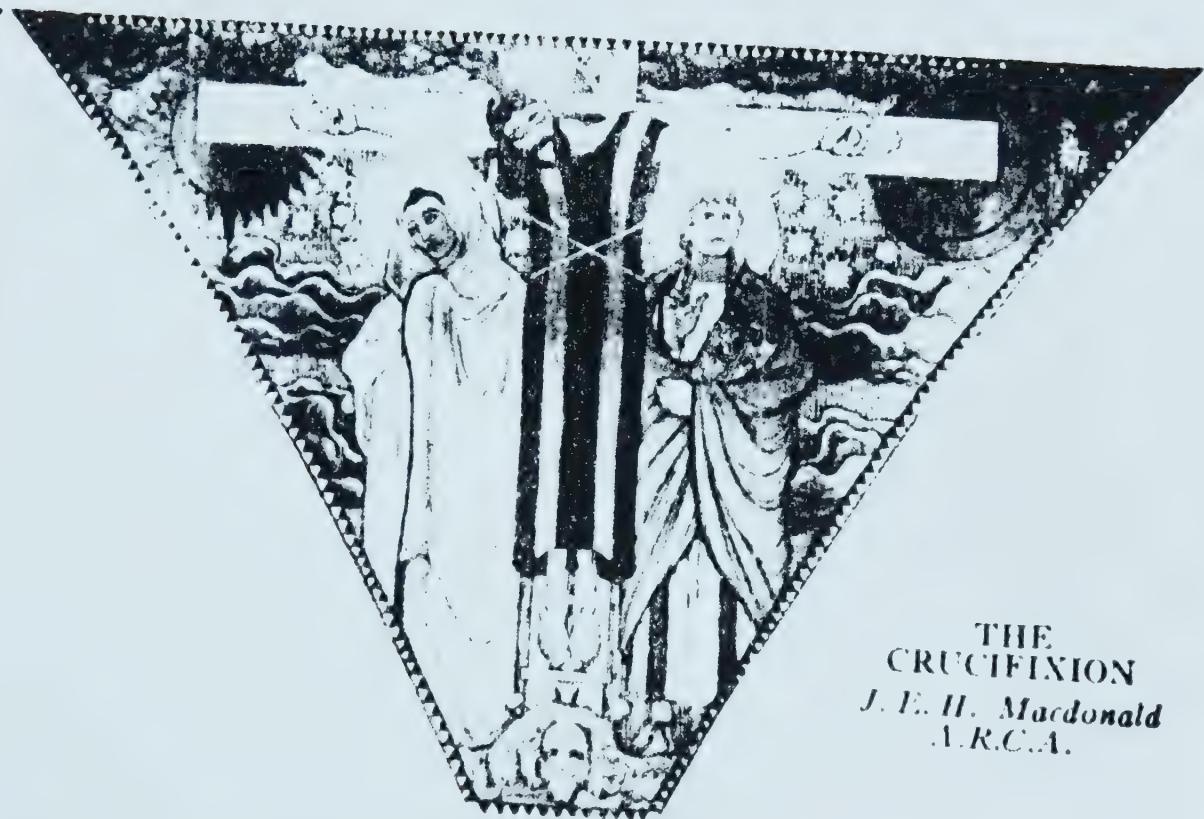
Plate 28

The Transfiguration

J.E.H. MacDonald

Mural, completed 1924

Location: Chancel, St. Anne's Anglican
Church, Gladstone Avenue,
Toronto



THE
CRUCIFIXION
J. E. H. Macdonald
A.R.C.A.

Plate 29

The Crucifixion
J.E.H. MacDonald
Mural, completed 1924
10' x 15'

Location: Chancel, St. Anne's Anglican
Church, Gladstone Avenue,
Toronto



Drawing by J. E. H. MacDonald.

Plate 30

Rocky Mountains
J.E.H. MacDonald
Untitled drawing, c. 1925
Location: The Canadian Forum
January, 1925



Plate 31

Interior of lounge, 1928
"The Claridge" apartment block
J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: Toronto



Plate 32

Sketch, West Indies, 1932

J.E.H. MacDonald

ink drawing

5" x 8"

Location: private collection



Plate 33

Sketch, 1915-1922

J.E.H. MacDonald

pencil drawing

6" x 7 3/4"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 34

Balsam pine frond
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 35

Beaver Pond, Algoma

J.E.H. MacDonald

linocut, 1920

7 1/2" x 5 1/2"

Location: private collection, Calgary

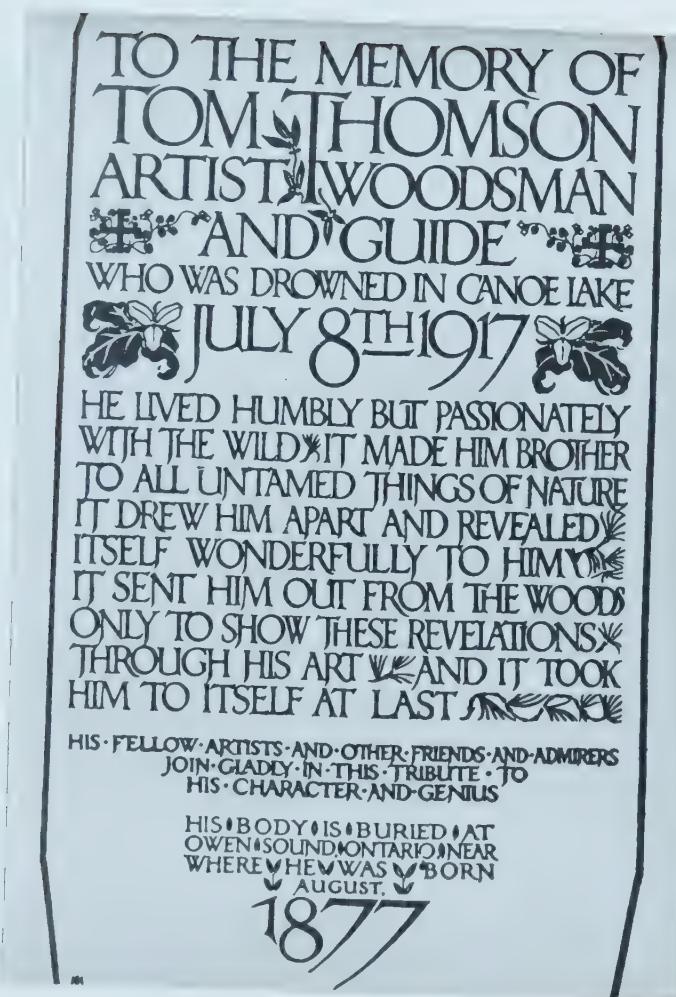


Plate 36

Tom Thomson Memorial Plaque
 designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
 etched brass, 1917
 Location: Canoe Lake, Algonquin
 National Park, Ontario



Plate 37

The Beaver Dam
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1919
32 1/8" x 34 1/8"

Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario,
Toronto

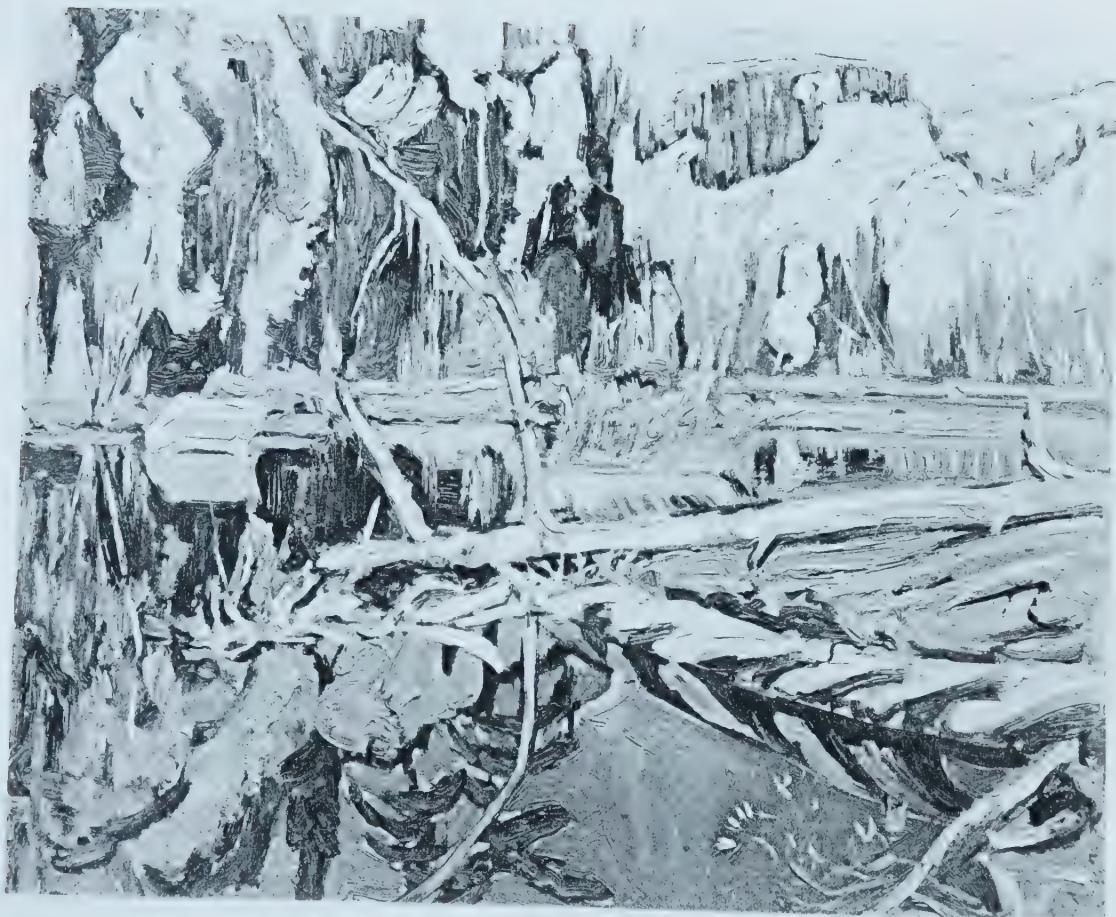


Plate 38

Beaver Pond, Algoma

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on board, 1919
8 1/2" x 10 1/2"

Location: private collection



Plate 39

Windy Day, Turtle Lake

J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on board, 1922

8 1/2" x 10 1/2

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

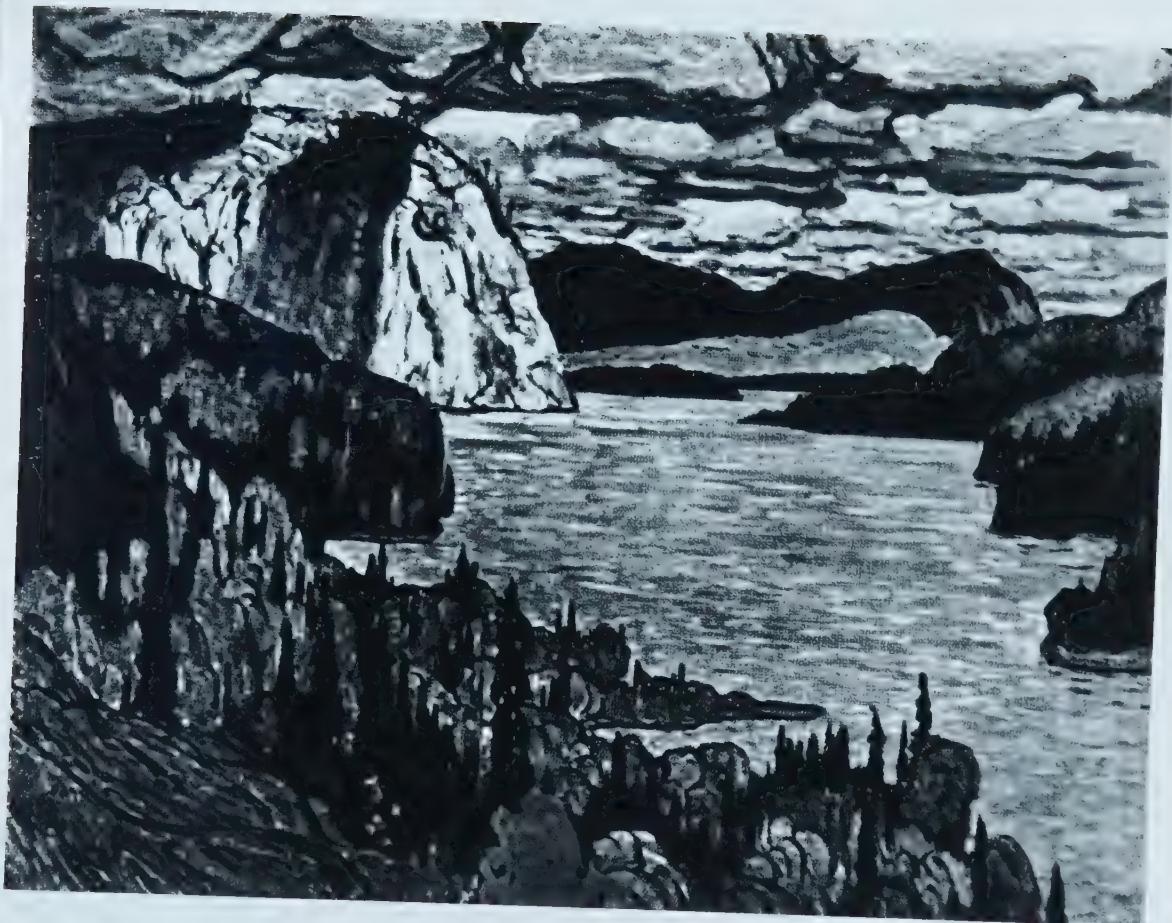


Plate 40

The Solemn Land
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1921
48" x 60"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 41

Autumn in Algoma
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1921
47 1/2" x 59 1/2"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada



Plate 42

Forest Wilderness
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1921
48" x 60"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 43

Falls, Montreal River

J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on canvas, 1920

48" x 60"

Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario

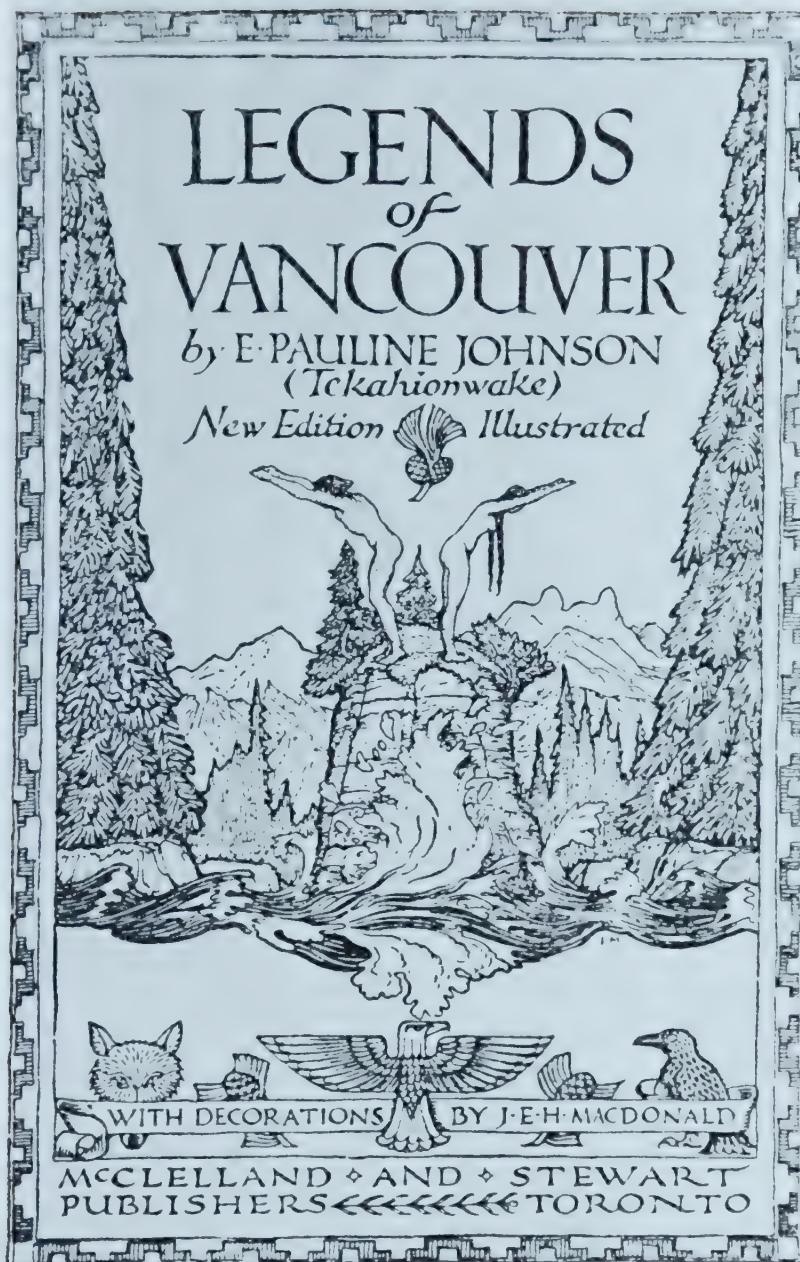


Plate 44

Legends of Vancouver
 designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
 title page, 1922
 Location: Publisher: McClelland and
 Stewart, Toronto



Untitled Sketch

Plate 45

Untitled sketch, c. 1896
J.E.H. MacDonald
brush and ink drawing
Location: private collection



Plate 46

Morning Shadows
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1912
28" x 36"

Location: Ontario Department of
Public Works



Plate 47

Morning after Snow, High Park

J.E.H. MacDonald

oil on canvas, 1912

33" x 28"

Location: The Art Gallery of Ontario



Plate 48

Spring Breezes, High Park
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1912
28" x 36"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

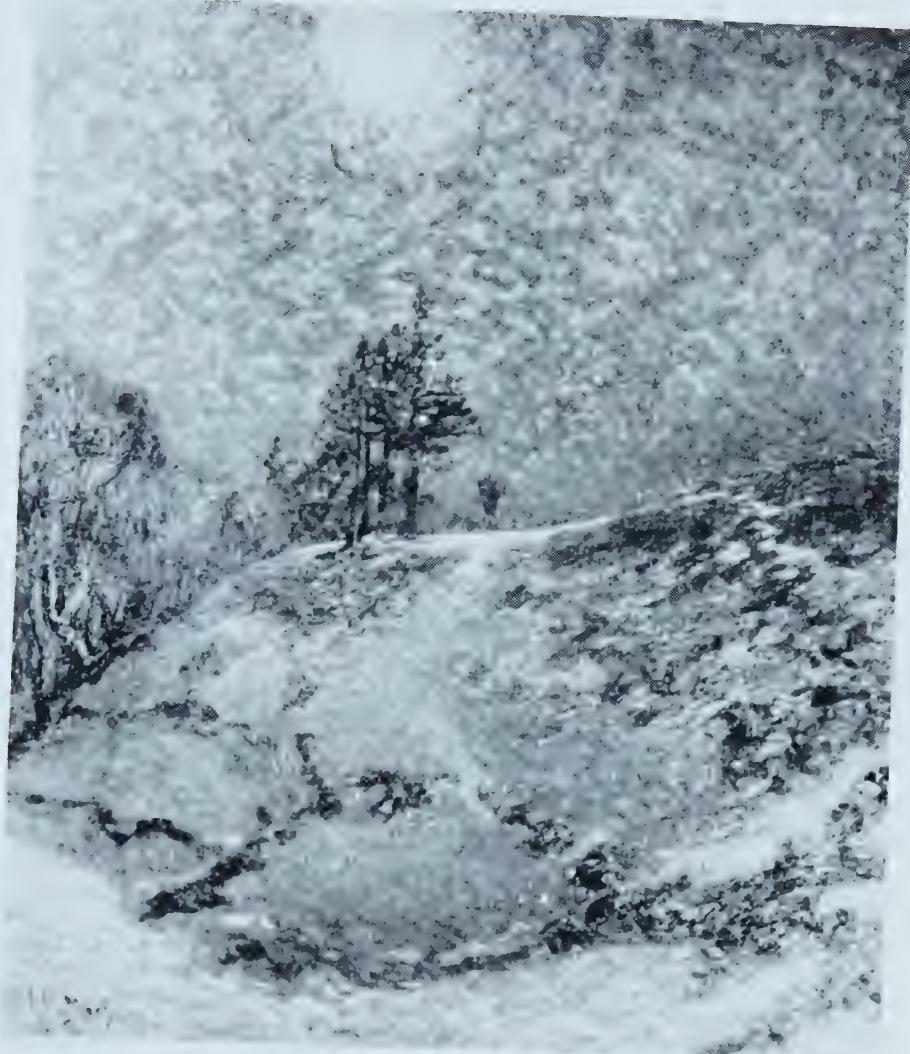


Plate 49

Early Evening, Winter
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1912
33" x 28"

Location: The Art Gallery of Toronto



Plate 50

Toronto Harbour with Ferry

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on board, 1912
7" x 5"

Location: private collection



Plate 51

Winter Sketch

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on board, 1912
5" x 6"

Location: private collection

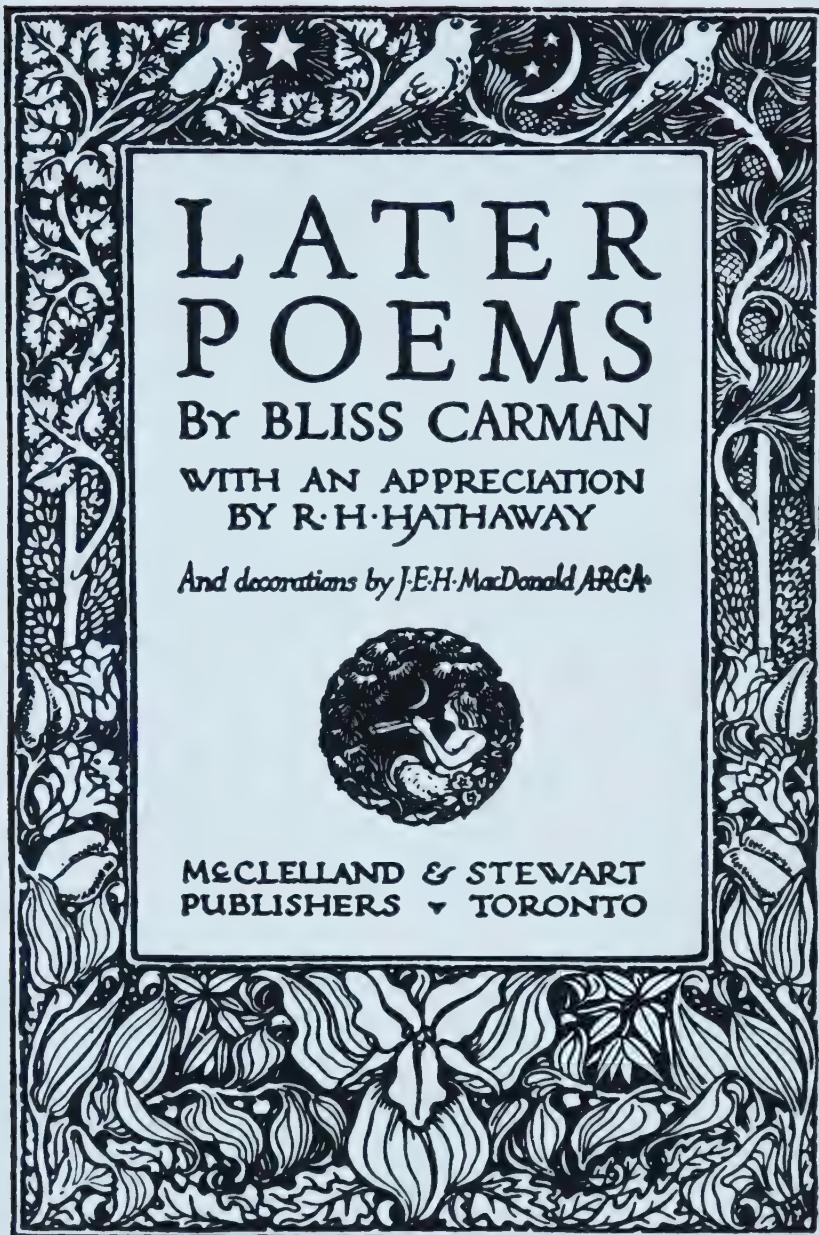
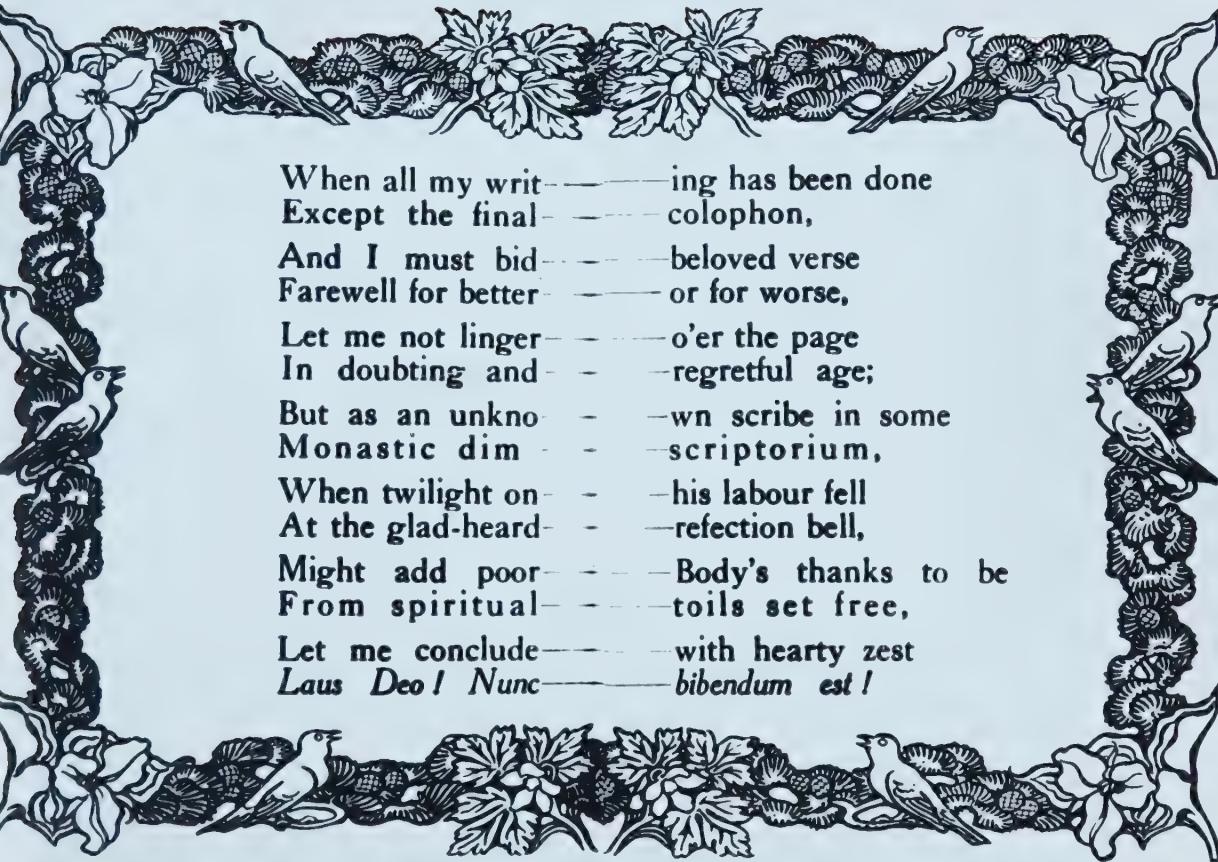


Plate 52

Later Poems

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
title page, 1921

Location: Publisher: McClelland and
Stewart Limited, Toronto



When all my writing has been done
 Except the final colophon,
 And I must bid the beloved verse
 Farewell for better or for worse,
 Let me not linger o'er the page
 In doubting and regretful age;
 But as an unknown scribe in some
 Monastic dim scriptorium,
 When twilight on his labour fell
 At the glad-heard refection bell,
 Might add poor Body's thanks to be
 From spiritual toils set free,
 Let me conclude with hearty zest
Laus Deo! Nunc bibendum est!

Plate 53

Later Poems

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
 endpapers, 1921

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
 Stewart Limited, Toronto

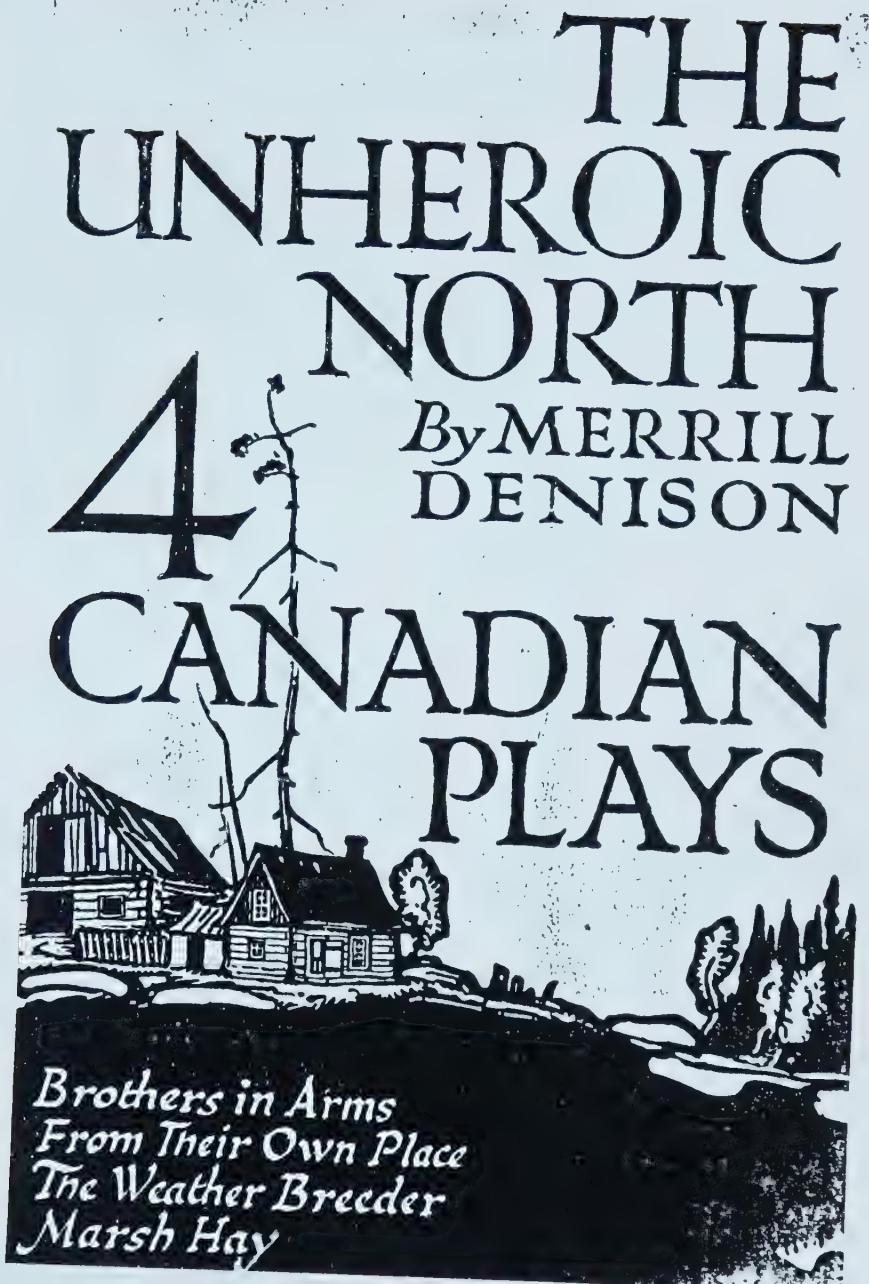


Plate 54

The Unheroic North
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
dustcover, 1923

Location: Publisher: McClelland and
Stewart Limited, Toronto

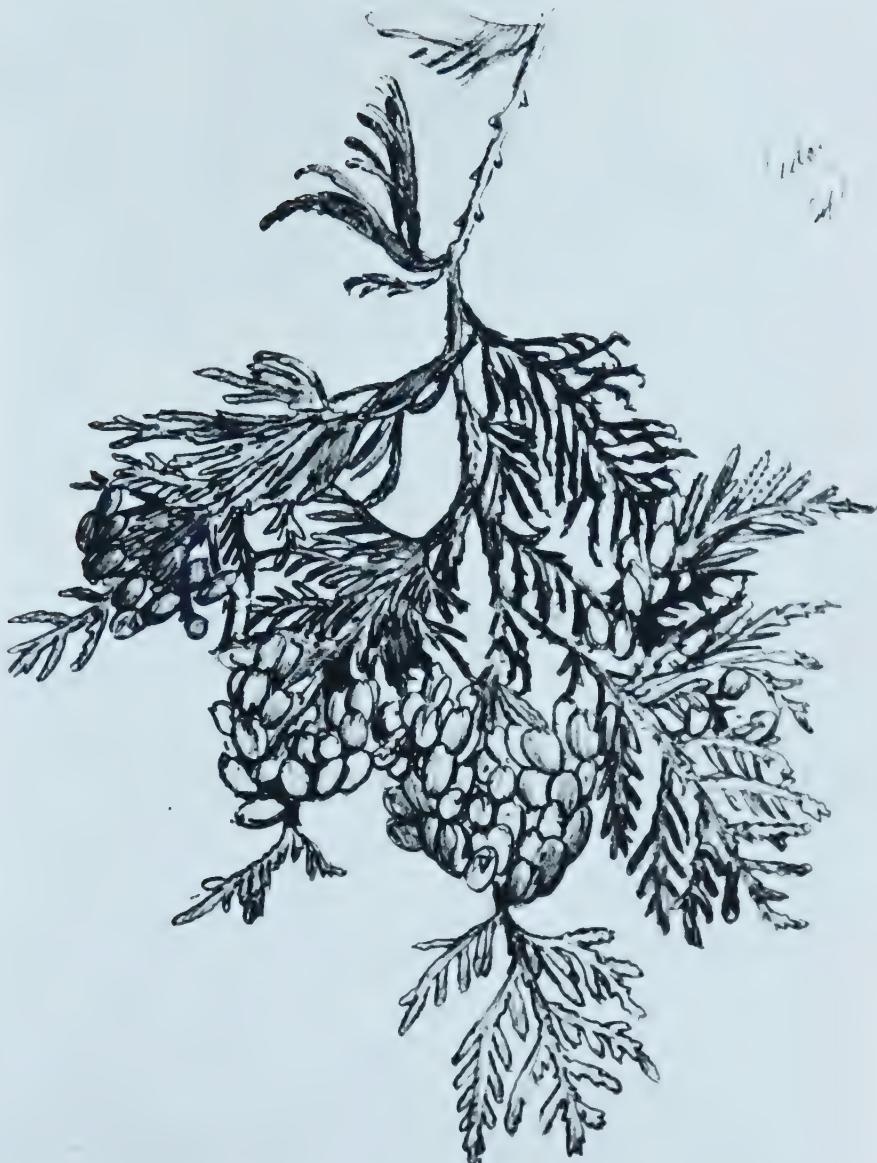


Plate 55

Cedar and Berries
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, June 15, 1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 56

Trillium

J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915/1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

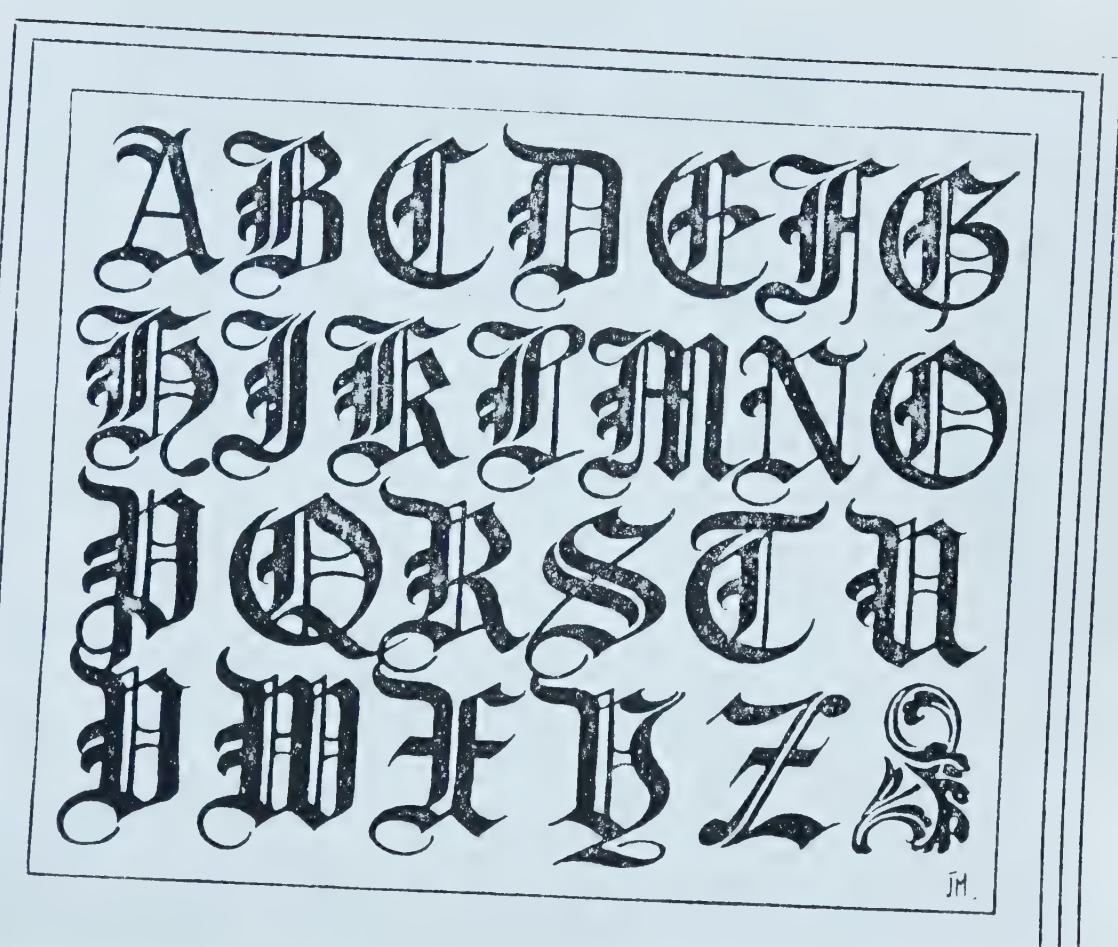


Plate 57

Black Letter Alphabet
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
ink drawing, 1909/1917
Location: The Shaw Correspondence
School Prospectus

The President and Council of the
Ontario College of Art
have awarded this Certificate to
Charles Paterson
in consideration of proficiency
in Advanced Evening.

Toronto,

Chairman

o/o

Plate 58

Certificate of Proficiency, O.C.A.
designer; J.E.H. MacDonald
ink drawing, n.d.
8 1/2" x 14"

Location: The Public Archives, Ottawa

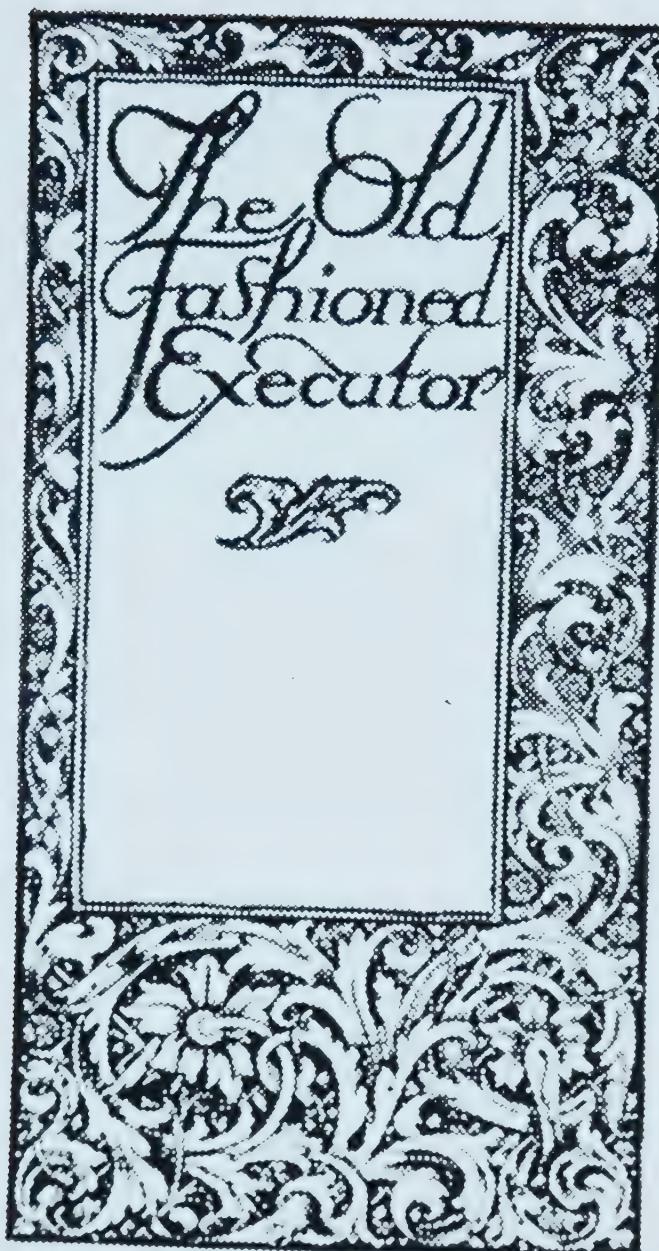


Plate 59

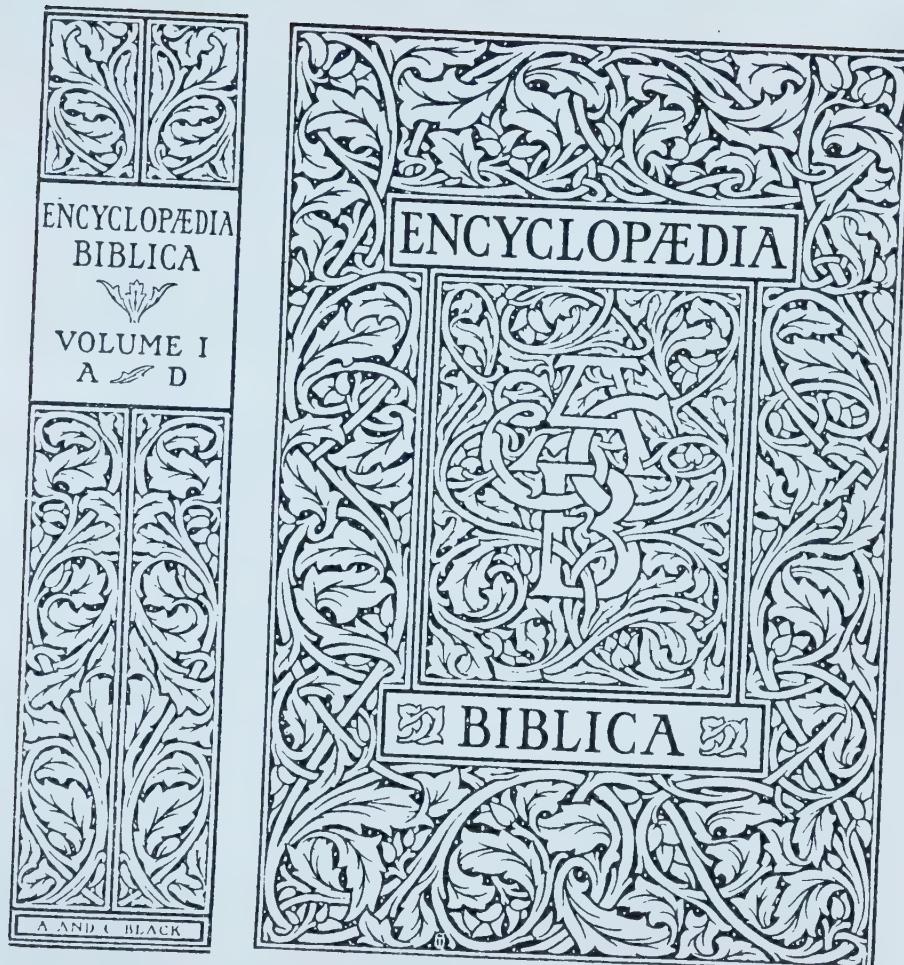
The Old Fashioned Executor
folder

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
National Trust Company cover, n.d.
Location: National Trust Company,
Toronto



Plate 60

Froissart
 designer: William Morris
 specimen leaf, 1895-1896
 location: not known



DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE

(A. & C. Black)

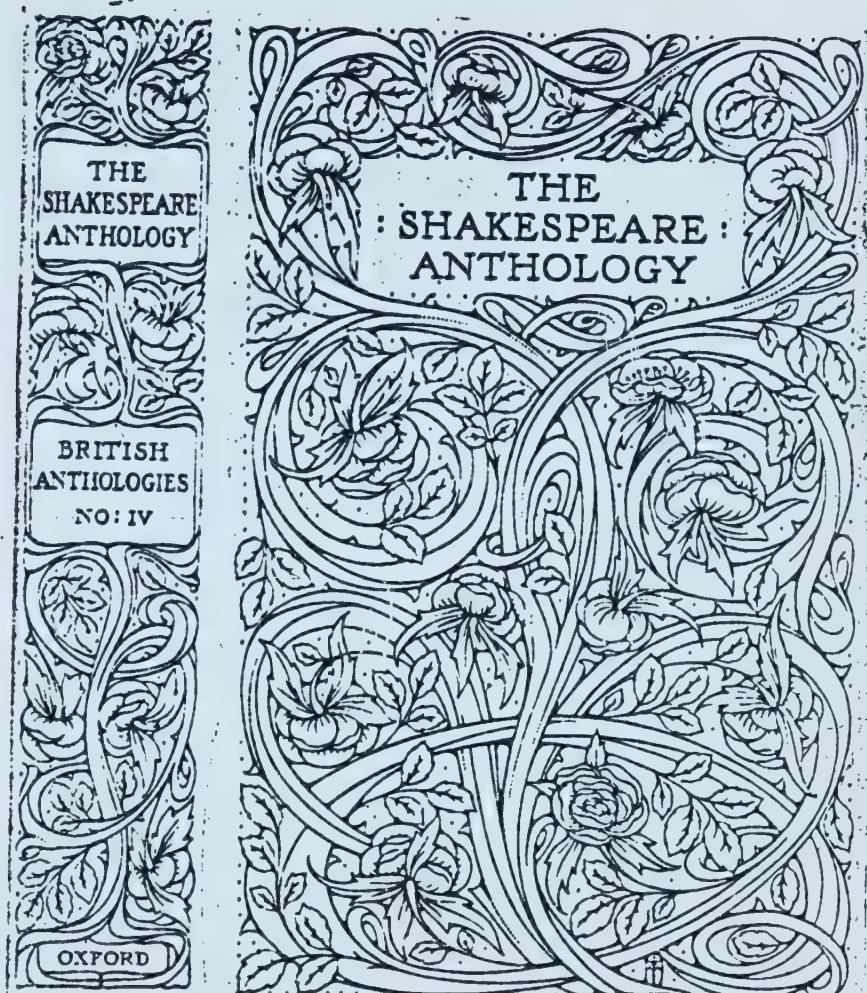
Plate 61

Encyclopaedia Biblica

designer: A.A. Turbayne

cover, Volume I, A - D, 1900

Location: Publisher: A. & C. Black,
London, England



DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE

(Oxford Press)

Plate 62

The Shakespeare Anthology
designer: A.A. Turbayne
cover, British Anthologies No: IV, 1900
Location: Publisher, Oxford Press,
Oxford, England

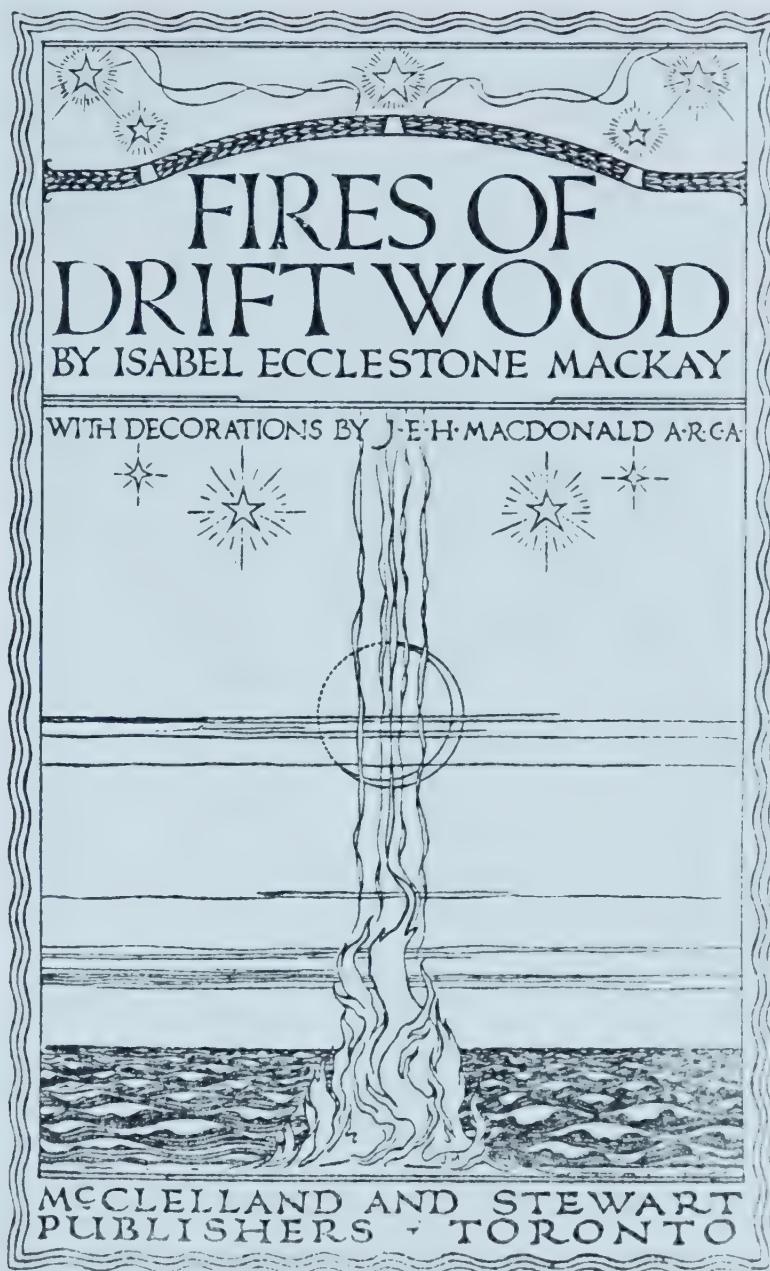


Plate 63

Fires of Driftwood
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
title page, 1922
Location: Publisher: McClelland and
Stewart Limited, Toronto

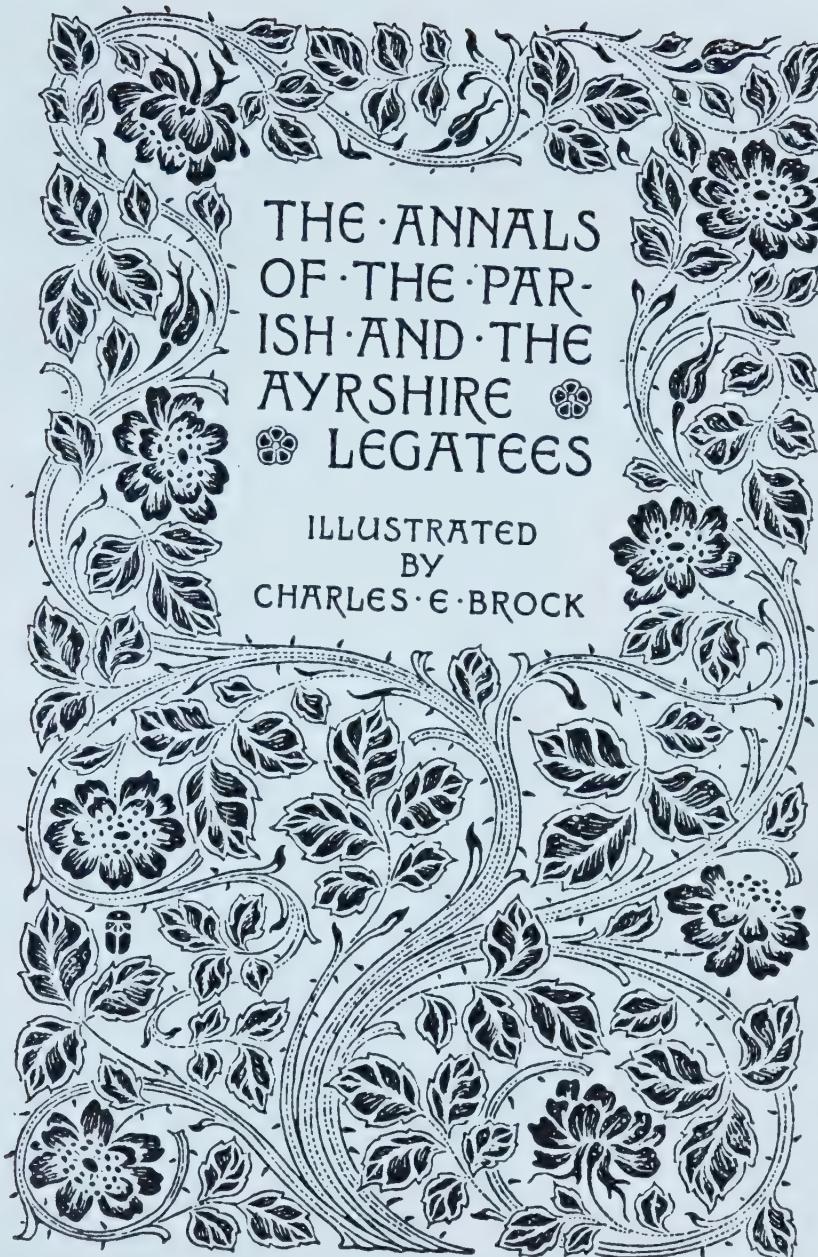
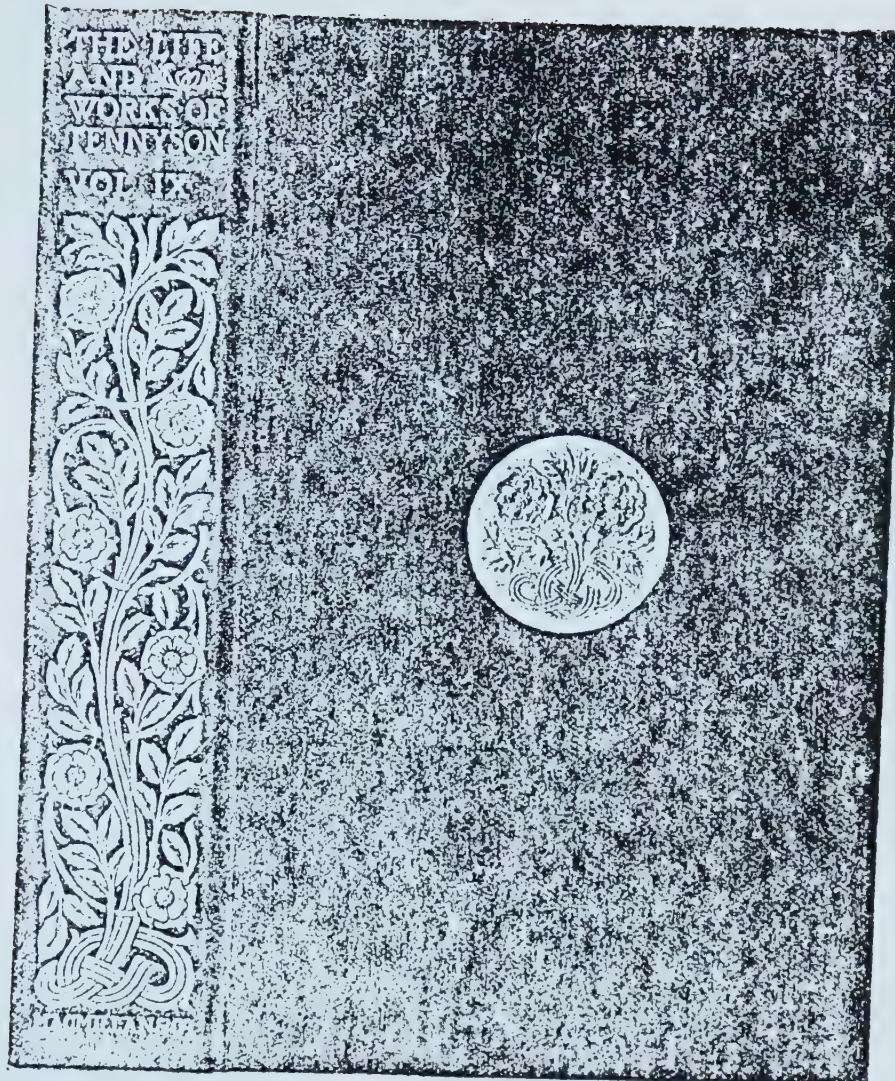


Plate 64

The Annals of the Parish and the
Ayrshire Legatees

designer: A.A. Turbayne
cover, 1900

Location: Publisher: MacMillan & Co.,
London, England



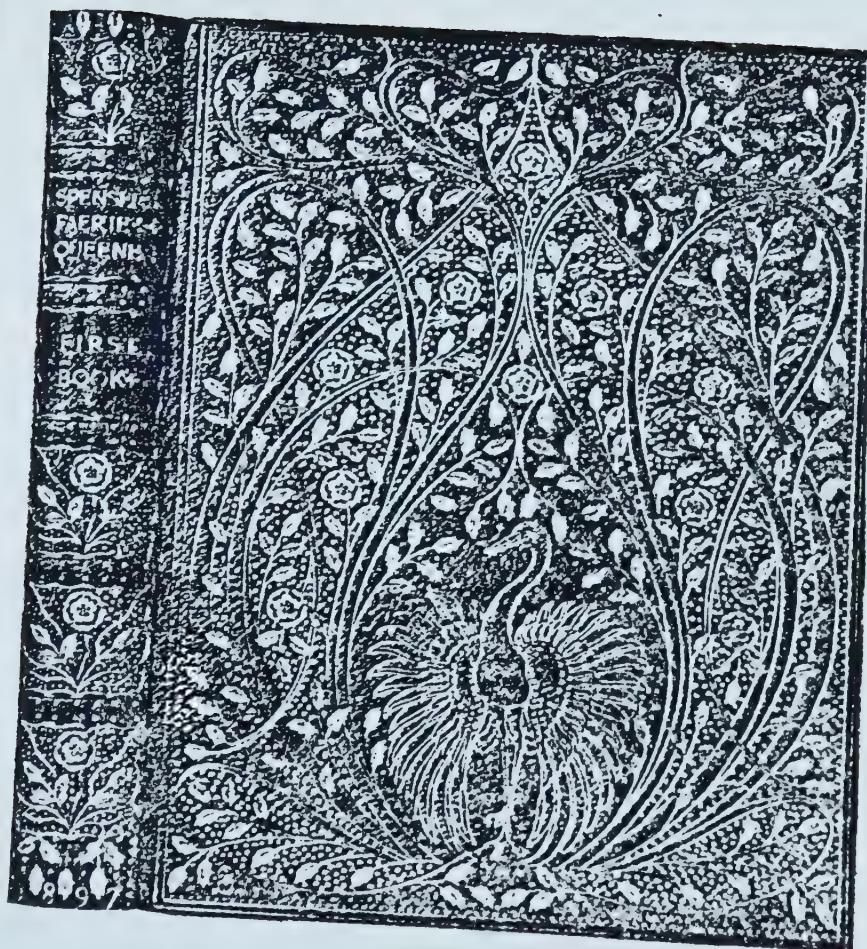
DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE

(*Macmillan & Co.*)

Plate 65

The Life and Works of Tennyson
designer: A.A. Turbayne
cover, 1897

Location: Publisher: MacMillan & Co.,
London, England



DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE EXECUTED BY W. T. MORRELL

Plate 66

Faerie Queen
designer: A.A. Turbayne
cover, First Book, 1900
Location: not known



Plate 67

Later Poems

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
cover, 1921

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

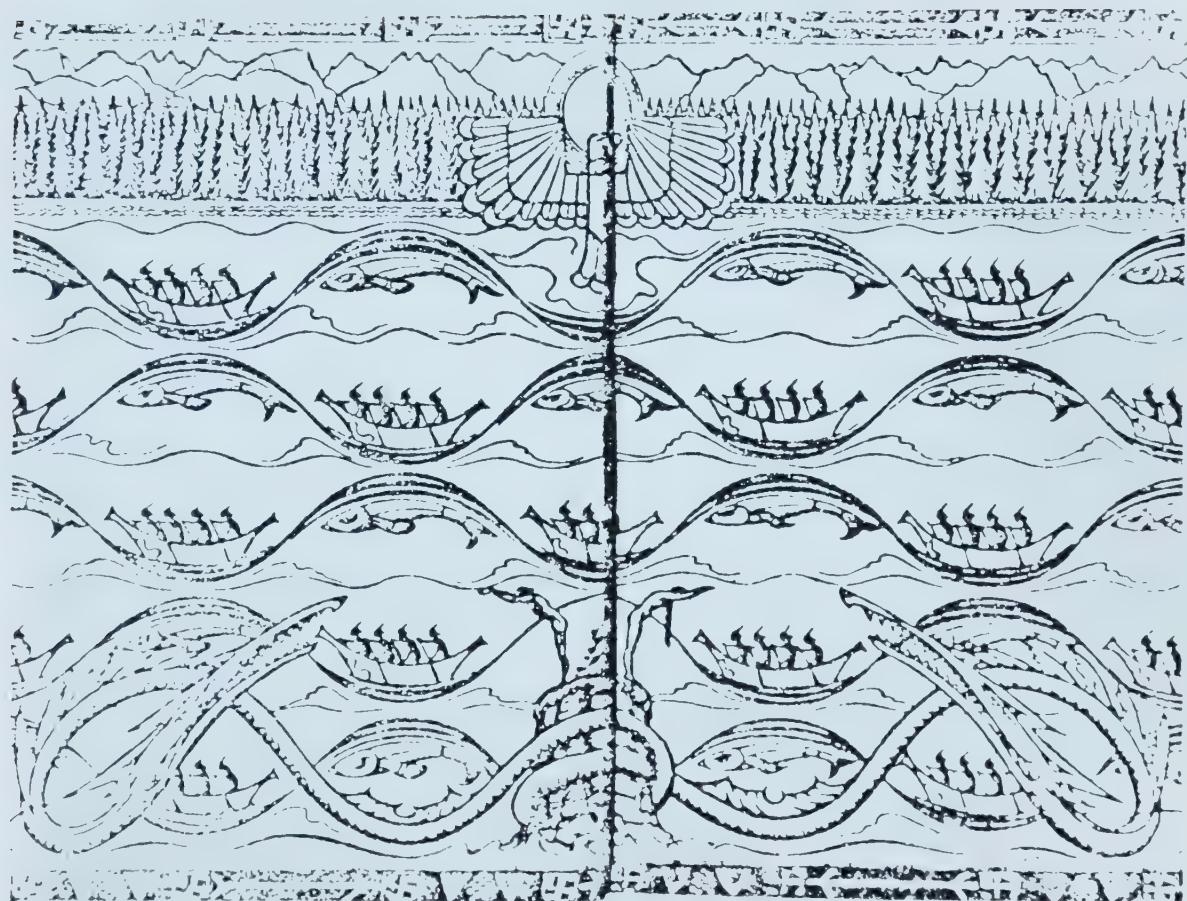


Plate 68

Legends of Vancouver

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
endpapers, 1922

Location: Publisher: McClelland and
Stewart, Toronto

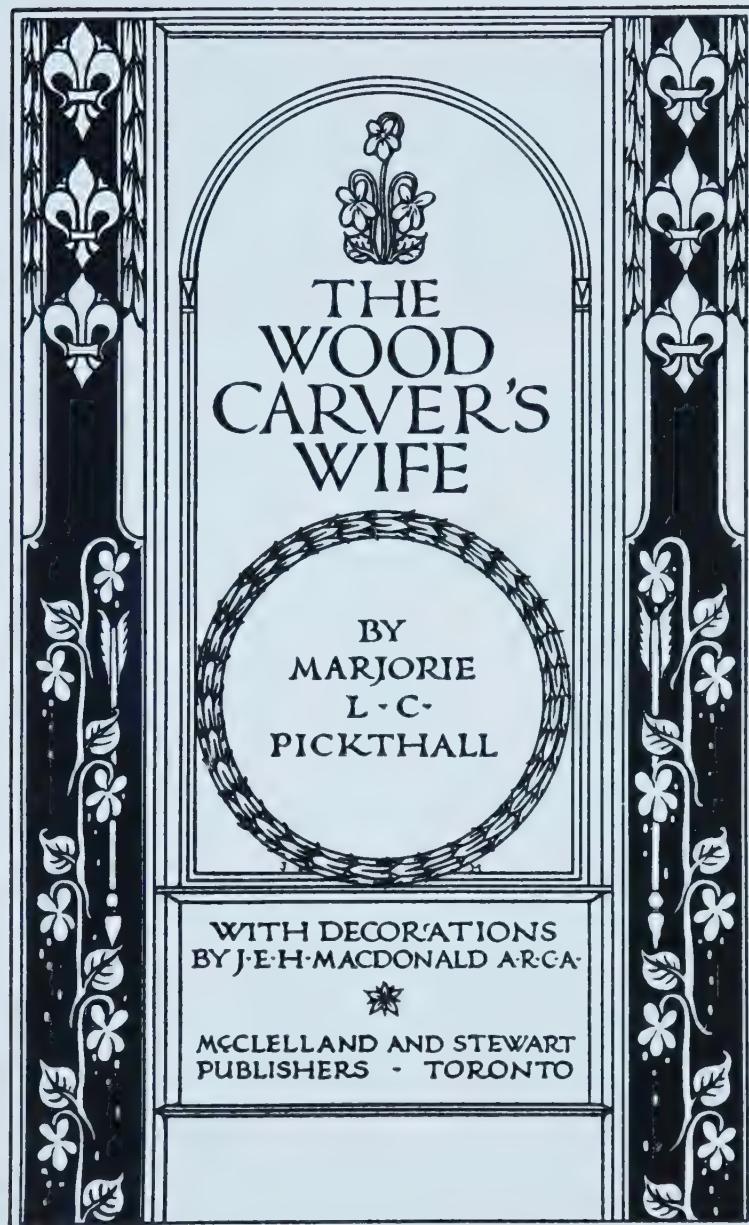


Plate 69

The Wood Carver's Wife
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
title page, 1922

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

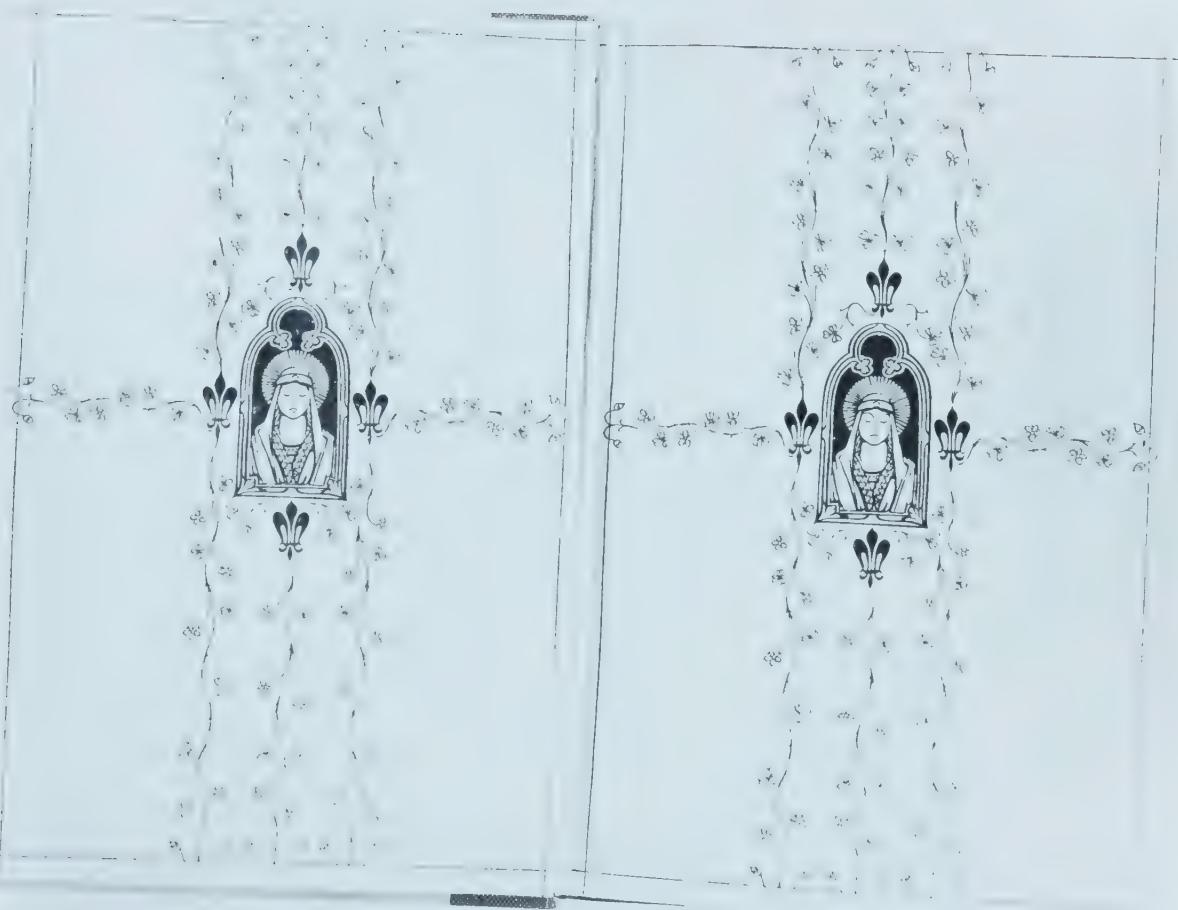


Plate 70

The Wood Carver's Wife
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
endpapers, 1922

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

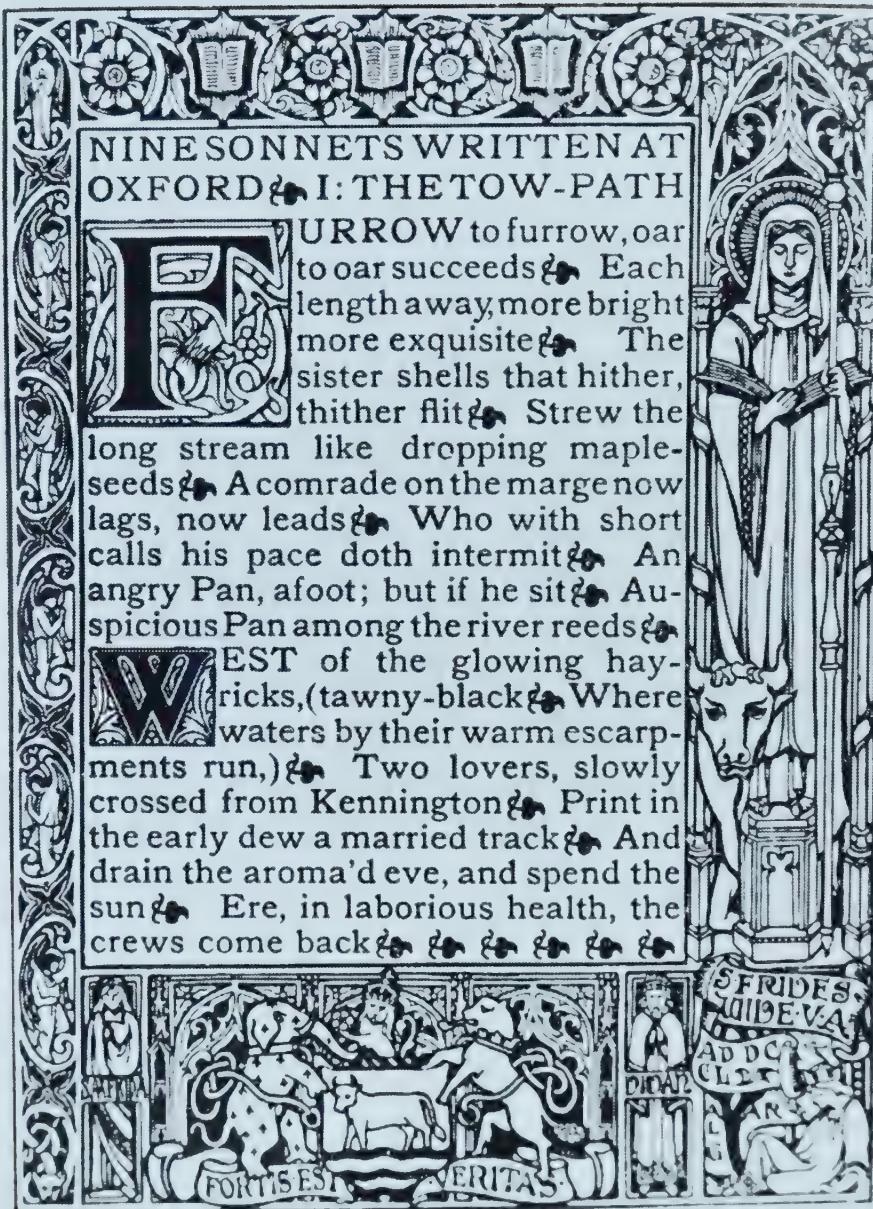


Plate 71

Nine Sonnets Written at Oxford
decorated page, 1895
Location: Publisher: Copeland & Day,
Boston

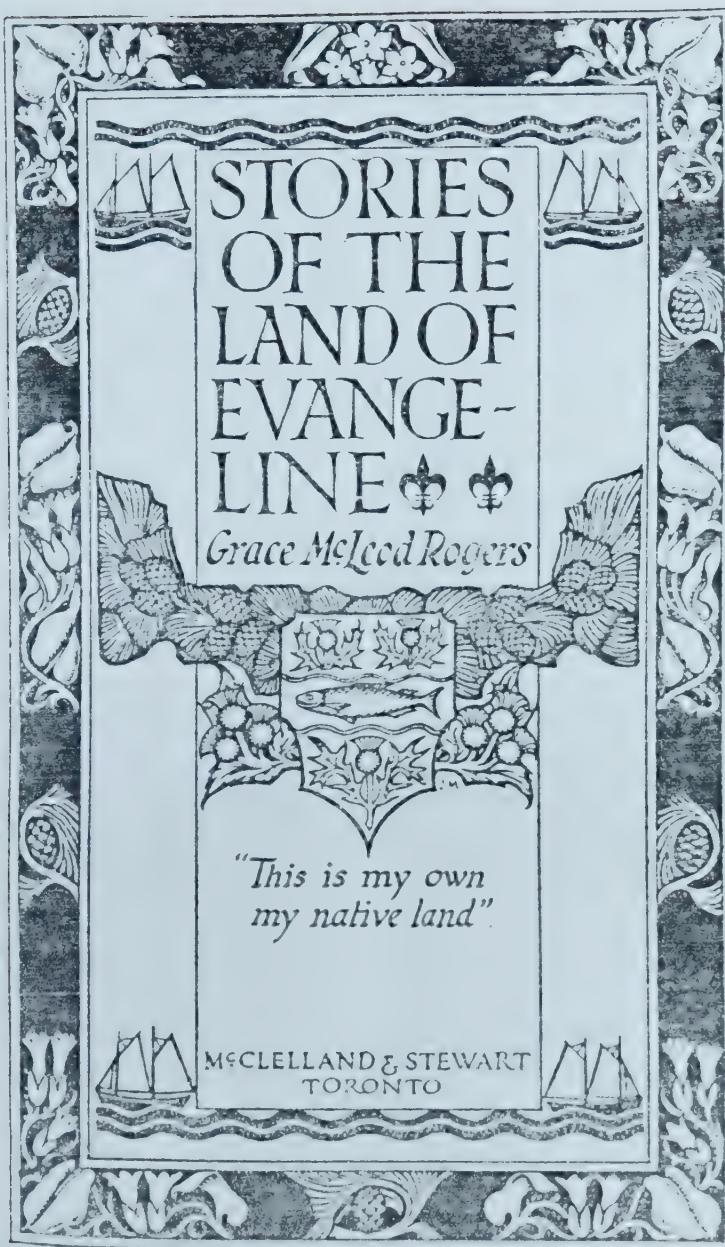


Plate 72

Stories of the Land of Evangeline

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald

decorated page, 1923

Location: Publisher: McClelland & Stewart Limited, Toronto

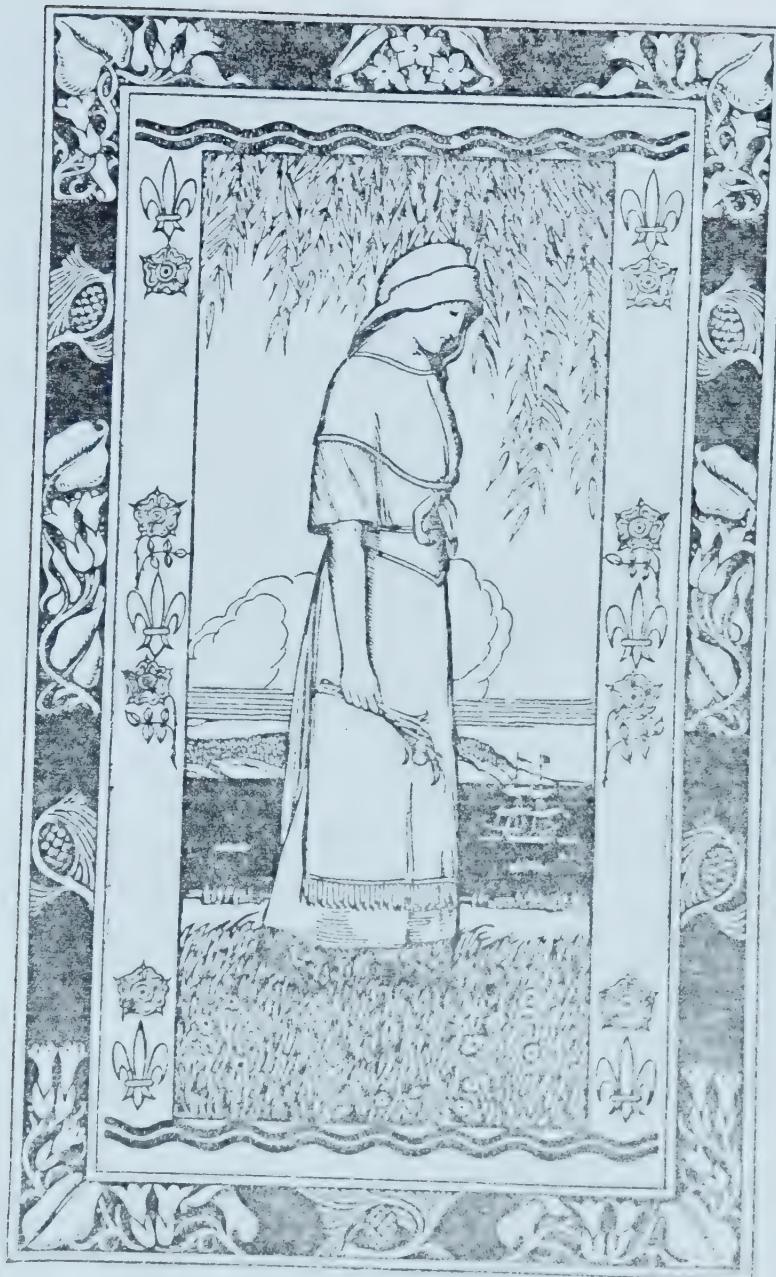


Plate 73

Stories of the Land of Evangeline
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
decorated page, 1923

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

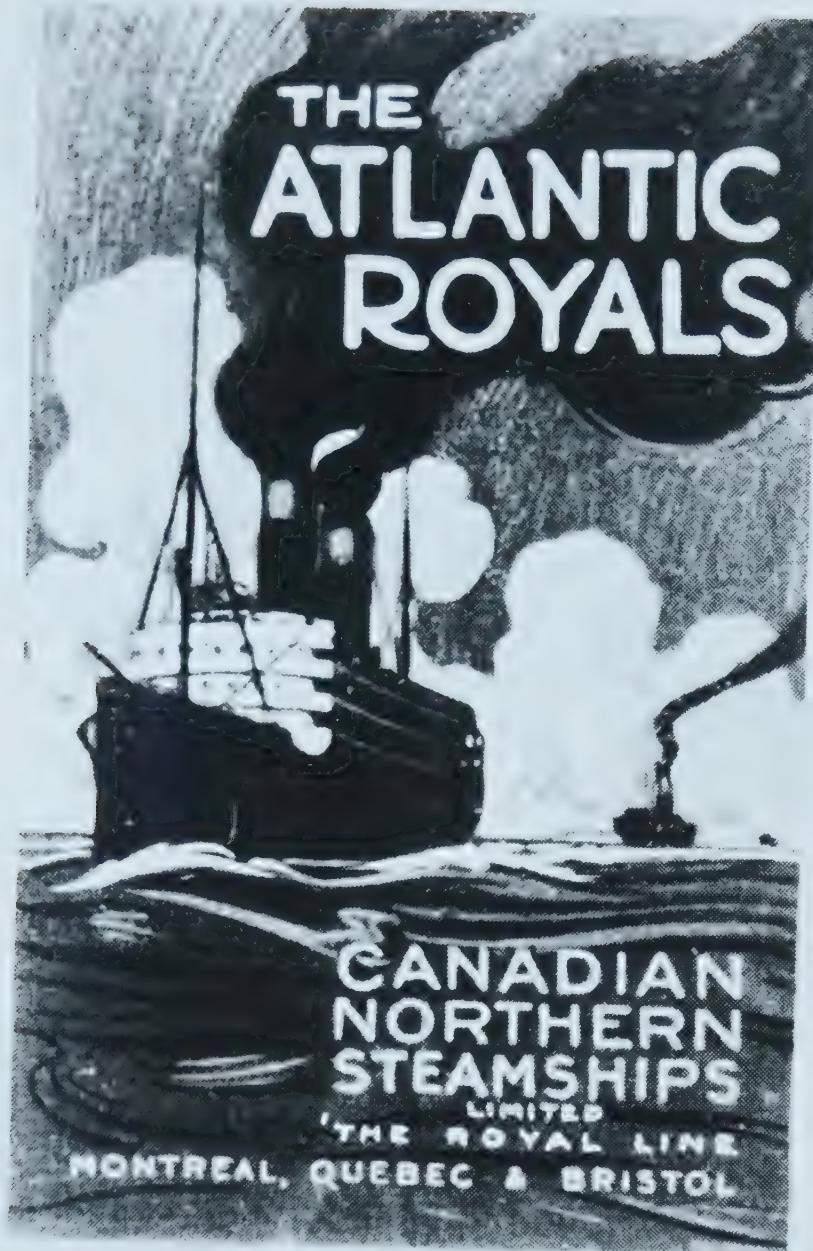


Plate 74

The Atlantic Royals
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
poster, 1909
Location: The Public Archives, Ottawa

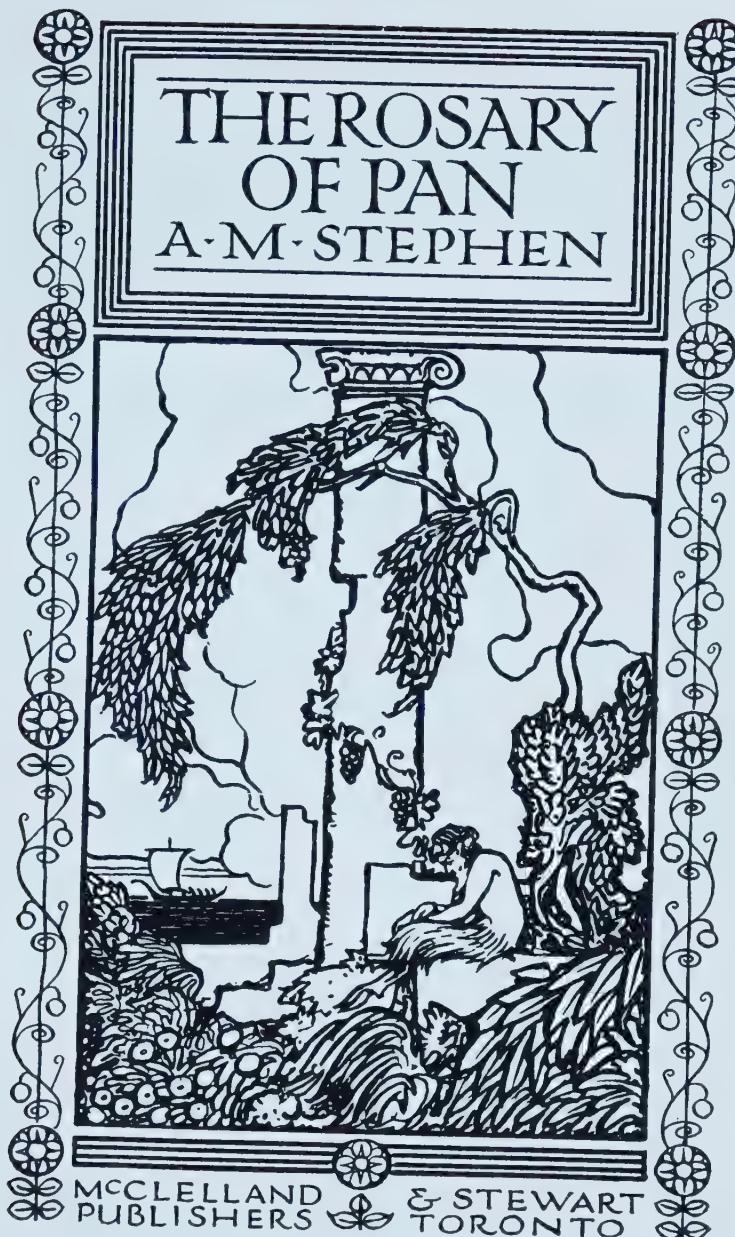
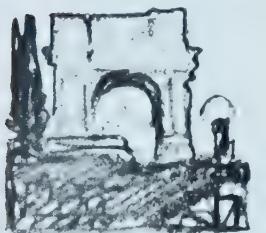


Plate 75

The Rosary of Pan

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
title page, 1923

Location: Publishers: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

Arch, Rome

Pantheon



St. Peter's

Plate 76

Classical ruins

J.E.H. MacDonald

pencil drawing, c. 1915

7 3/4" x 6"

Location: The National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

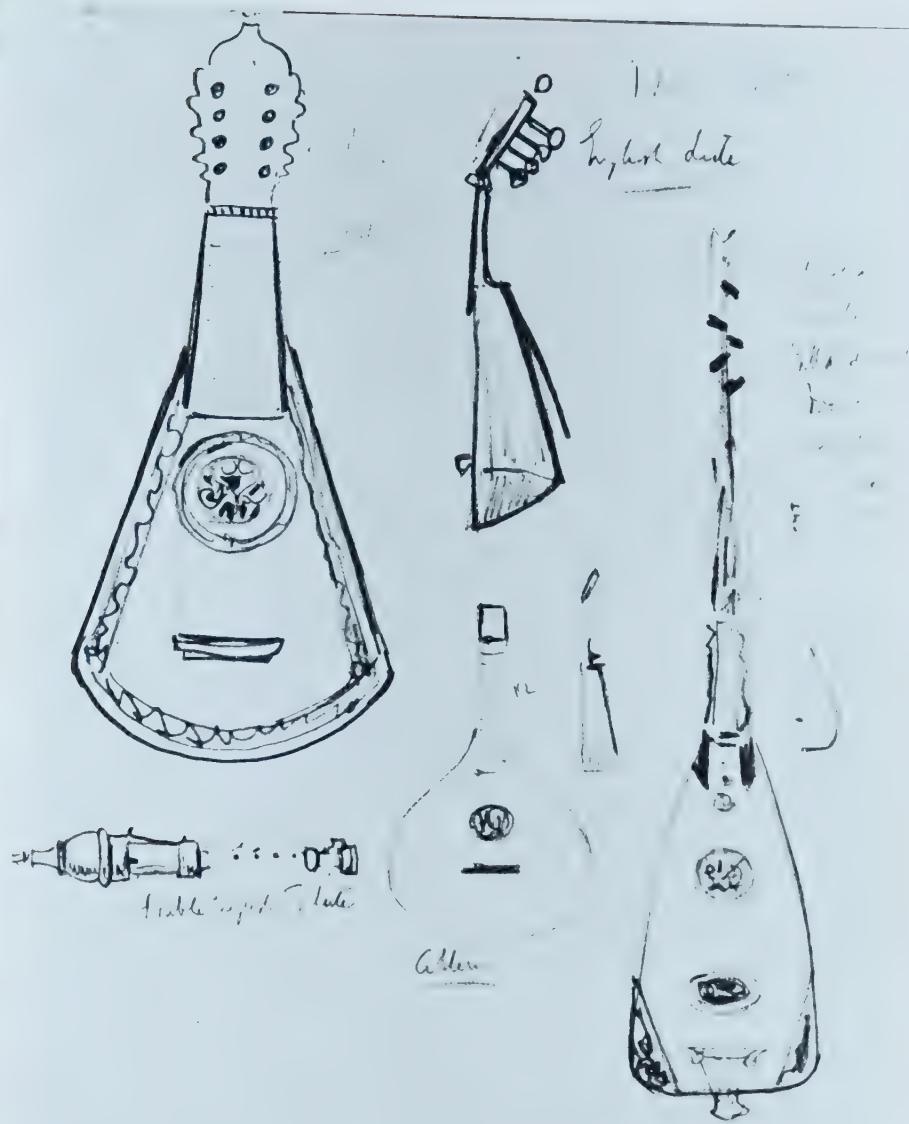


Plate 77

Musical instruments
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, c. 1923
7 3/4" x 6"
Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

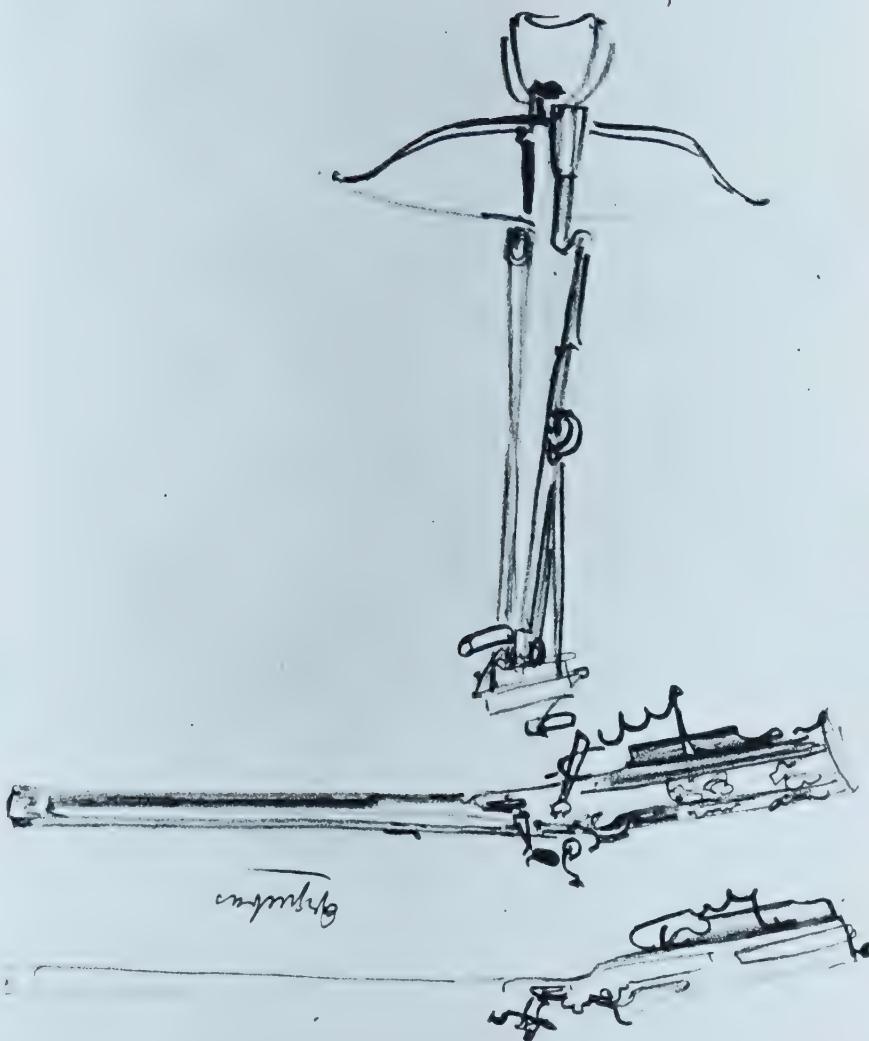


Plate 78

Weapons

J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, c. 1923
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

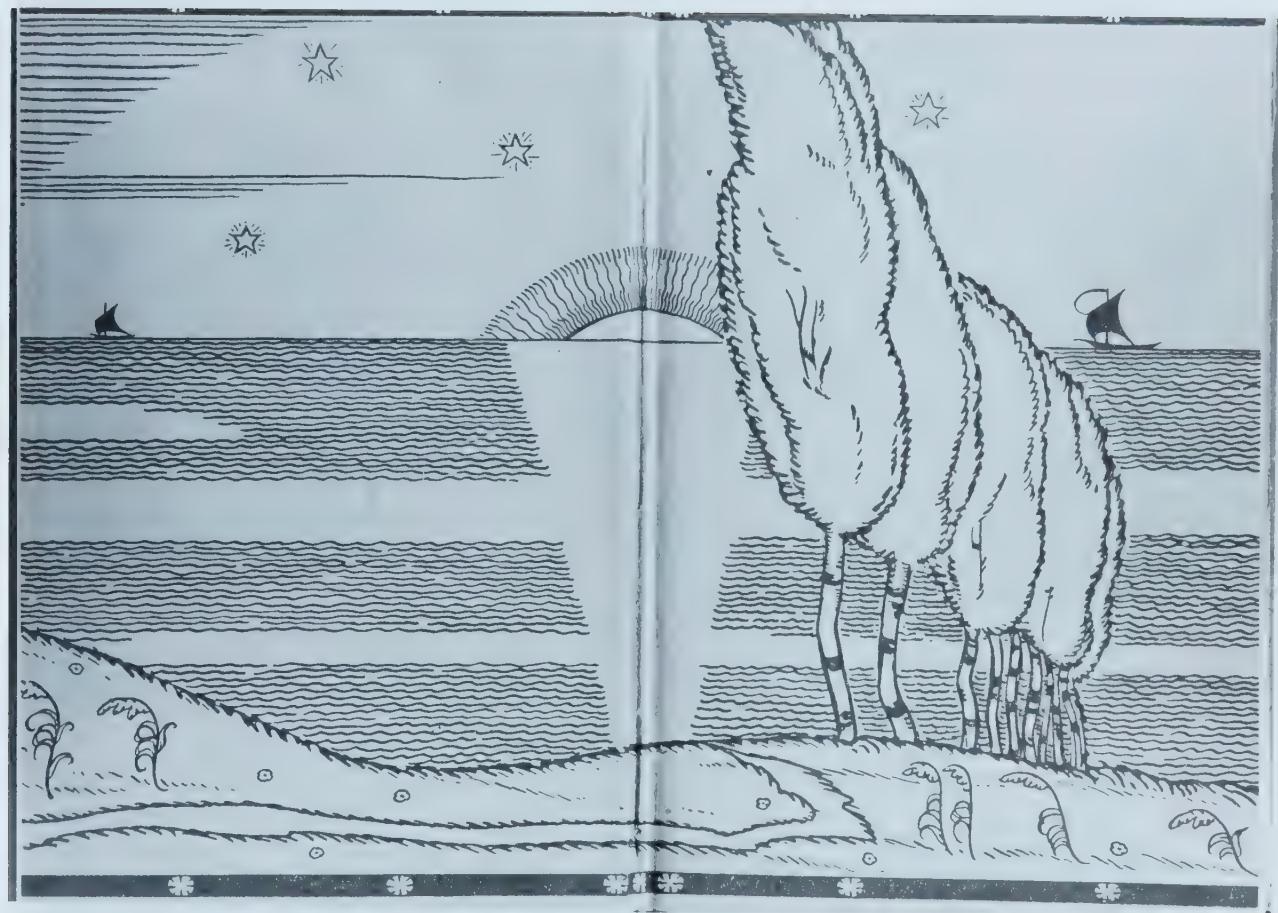


Plate 79

White Winds of Dawn

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
endpapers, 1924

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto



Old Province Tales

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald

endpapers, 1924

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

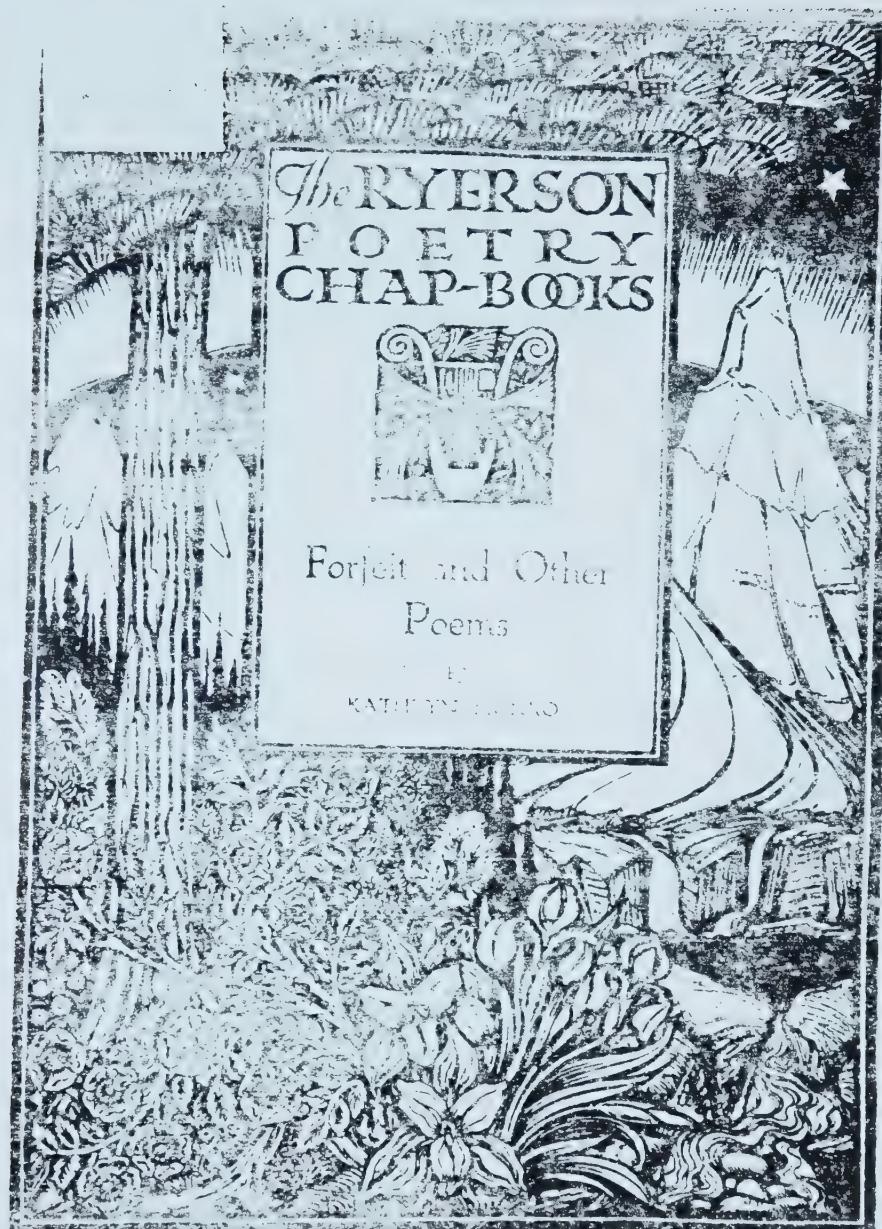


Plate 81

Ryerson Poetry Chapbook
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
cover, 1924
Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

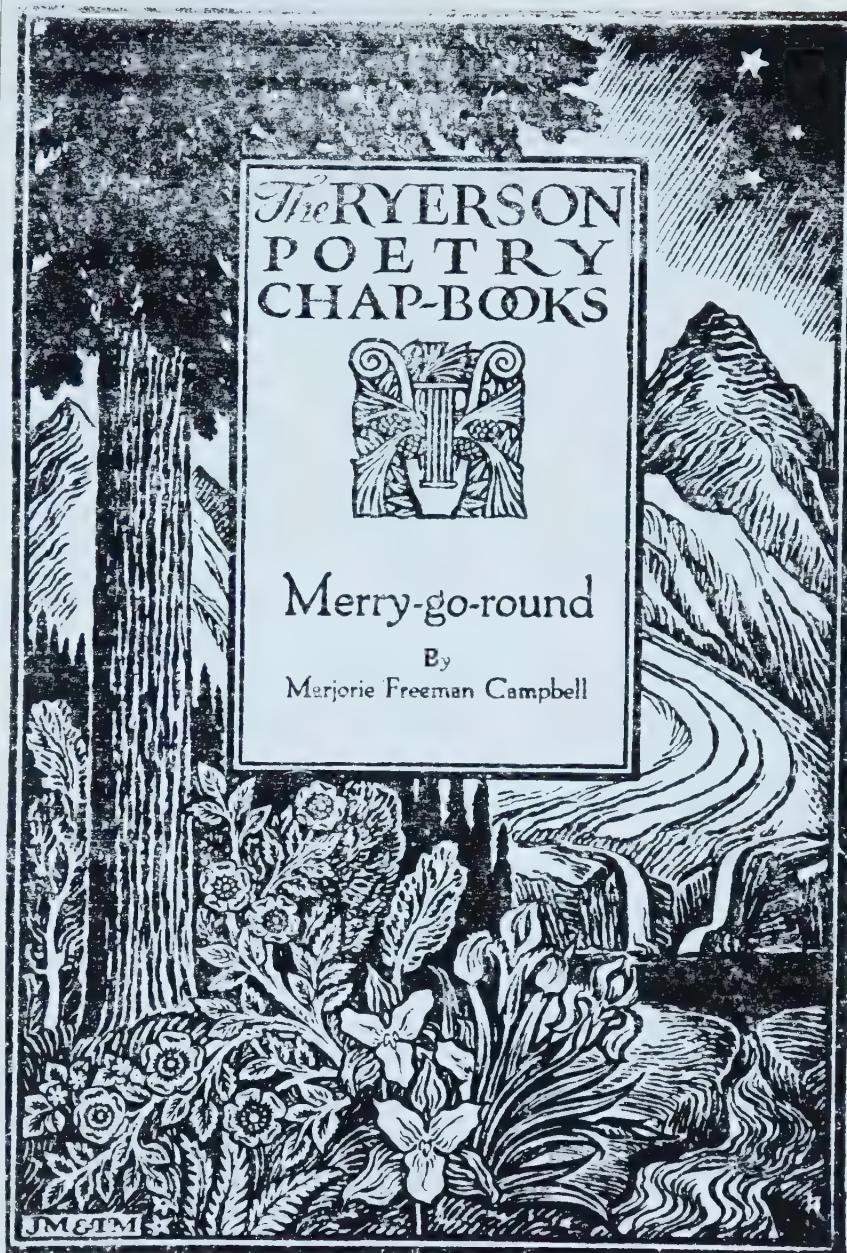


Plate 82

Ryerson Poetry Chapbook
designer: Thoreau MacDonald
cover, after 1932
Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

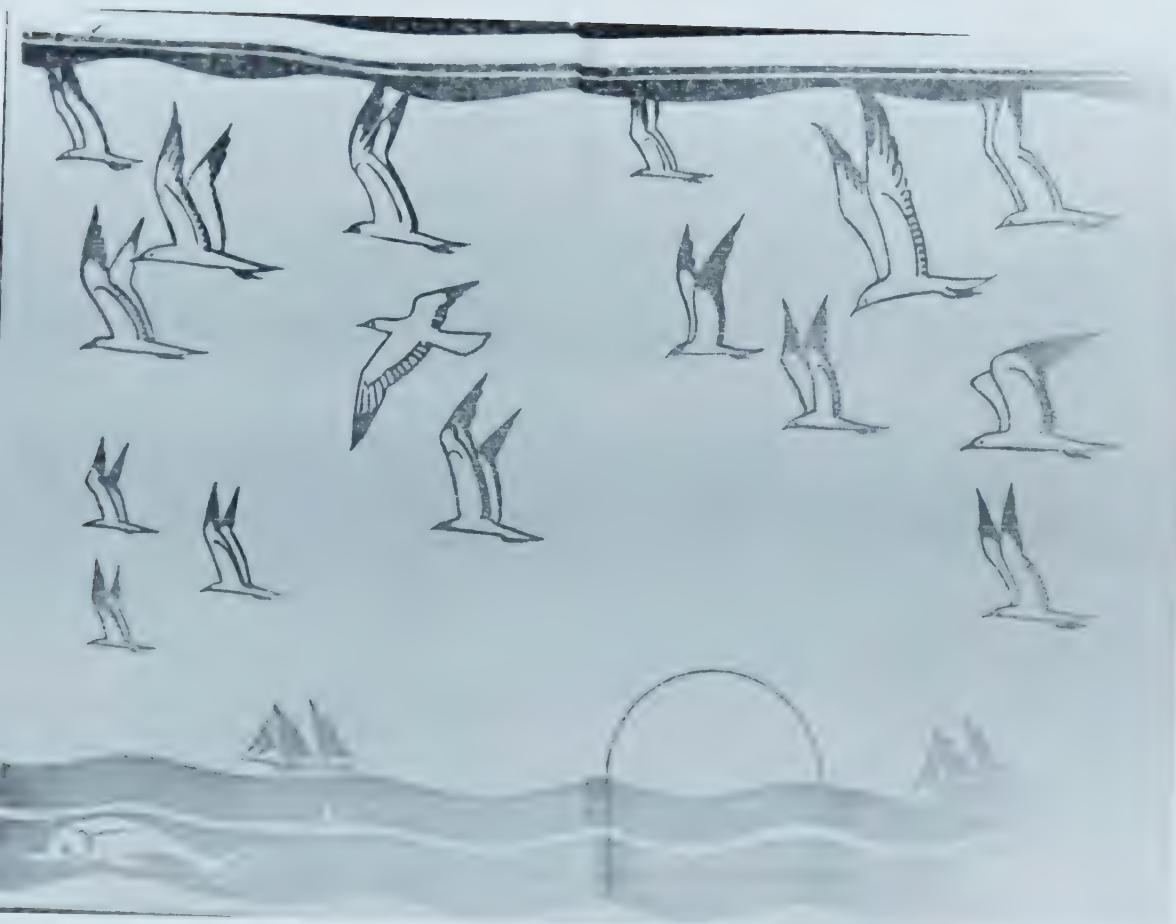


Plate 83

The Book of Ultima Thule
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
endpapers, 1927

Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto

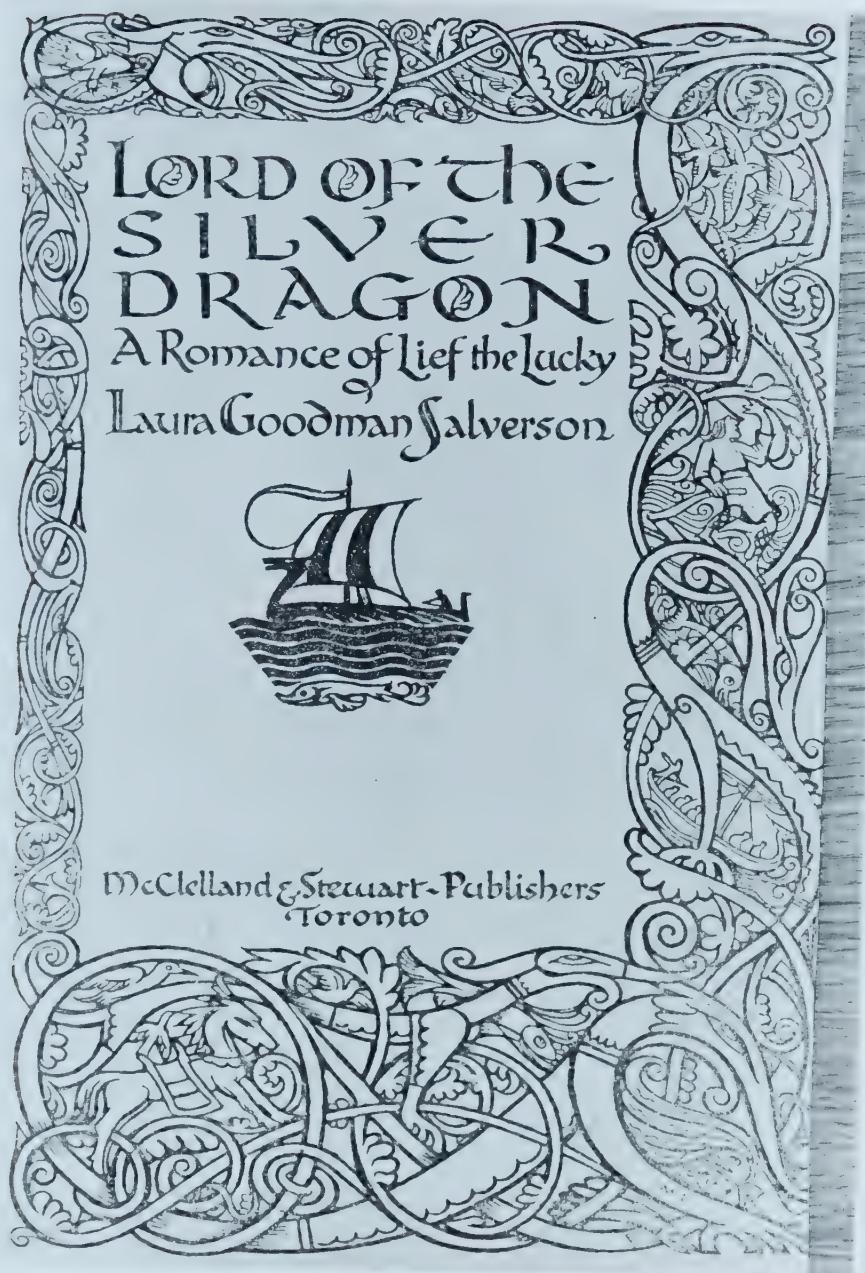


Plate 84

Lord of the Silver Dragon:
A Romance of Lief the Lucky
Designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
title page, 1927
Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto



Plate 85

Lord of the Silver Dragon:
A Romance of Lief the Lucky
Designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
decorated page, 1927
Location: Publisher: McClelland &
Stewart Limited, Toronto



Plate 86

Canada and the Call
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Poster, 1914

Location: Ontario College of Art
Archives

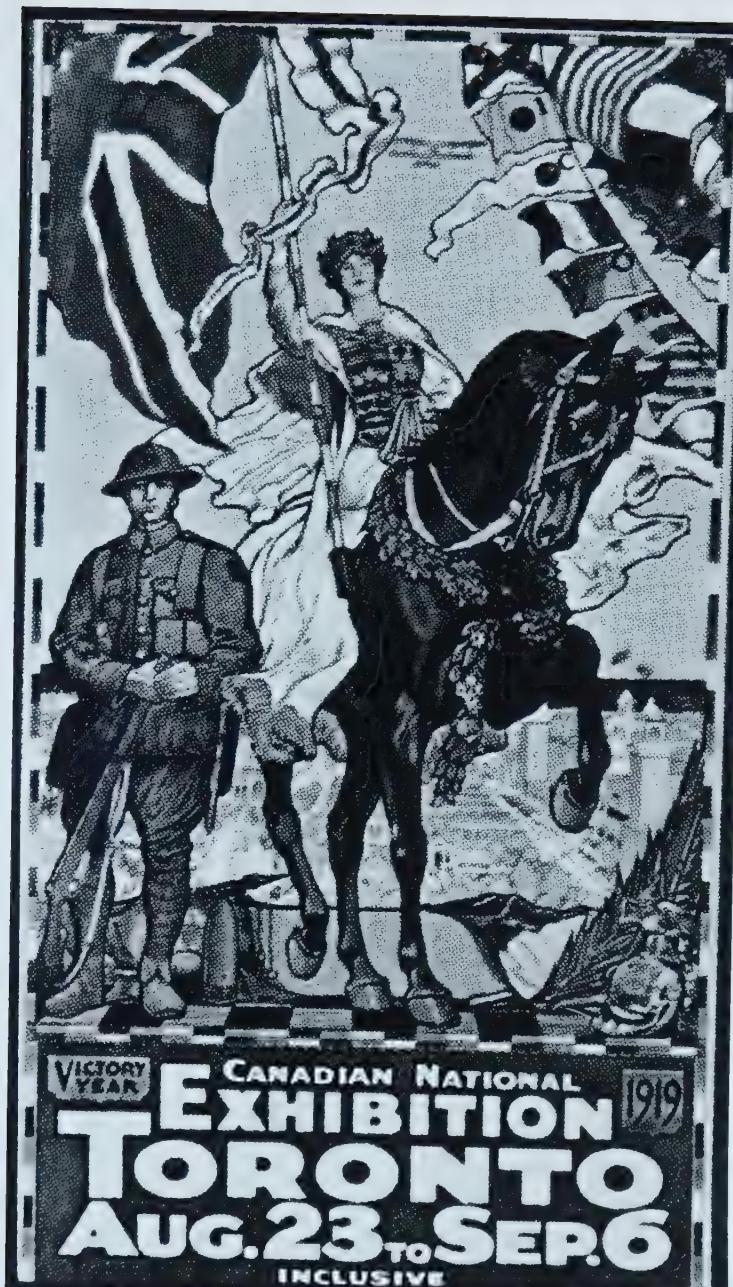


Plate 87

Victory Year

designer: J.E.H. MacDonald

C. N. E. souvenir programm-cover
and poster, 1919

Location: not known



Plate 88

Rearing horse

J.E.H. MacDonald

pencil drawing, 1915-1922

7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 89

Union Jacks and drapery
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915-1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 90

Drapery
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915-1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 91

Union Jack
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915-1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 92

Hands, pole, drapery
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915-1922
7 3/4" x 6"
Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa

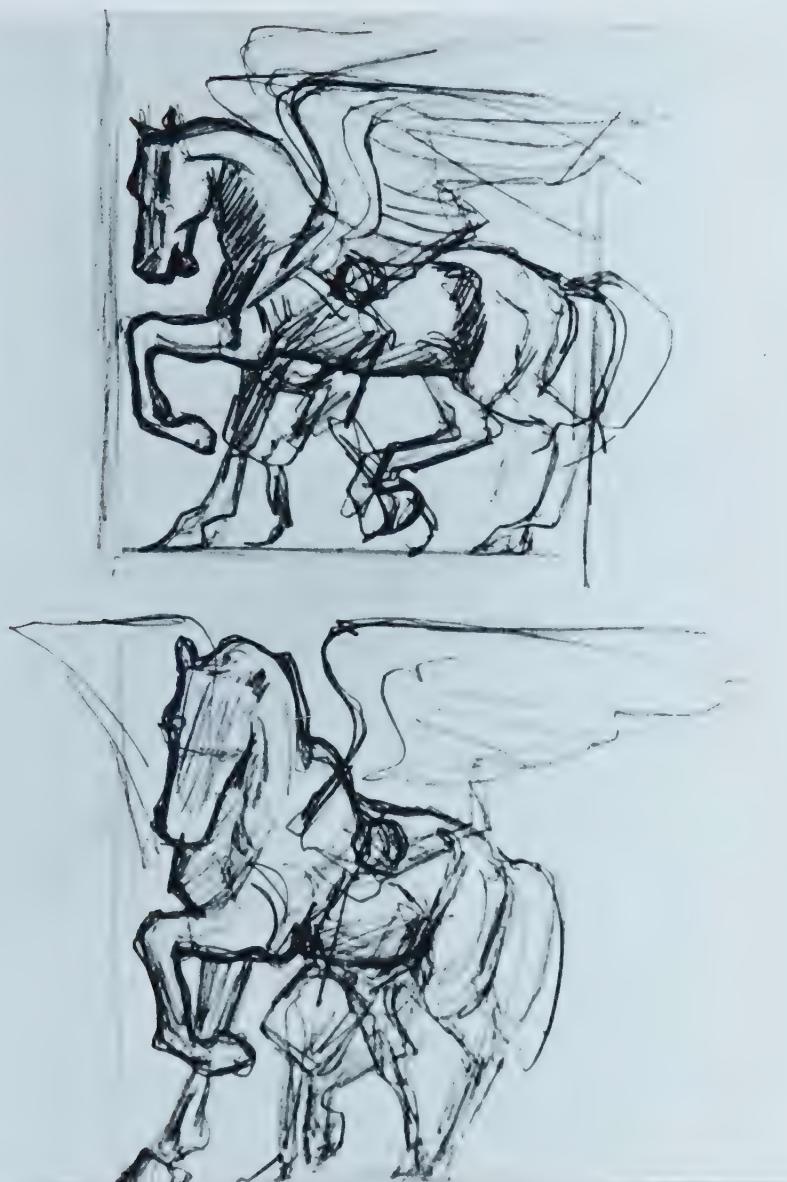


Plate 93

Winged horses,
J.E.H. MacDonald
pencil drawing, 1915-1922
7 3/4" x 6"

Location: National Gallery of
Canada, Ottawa



Plate 94

Bookplate, Dr. James MacCallum
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

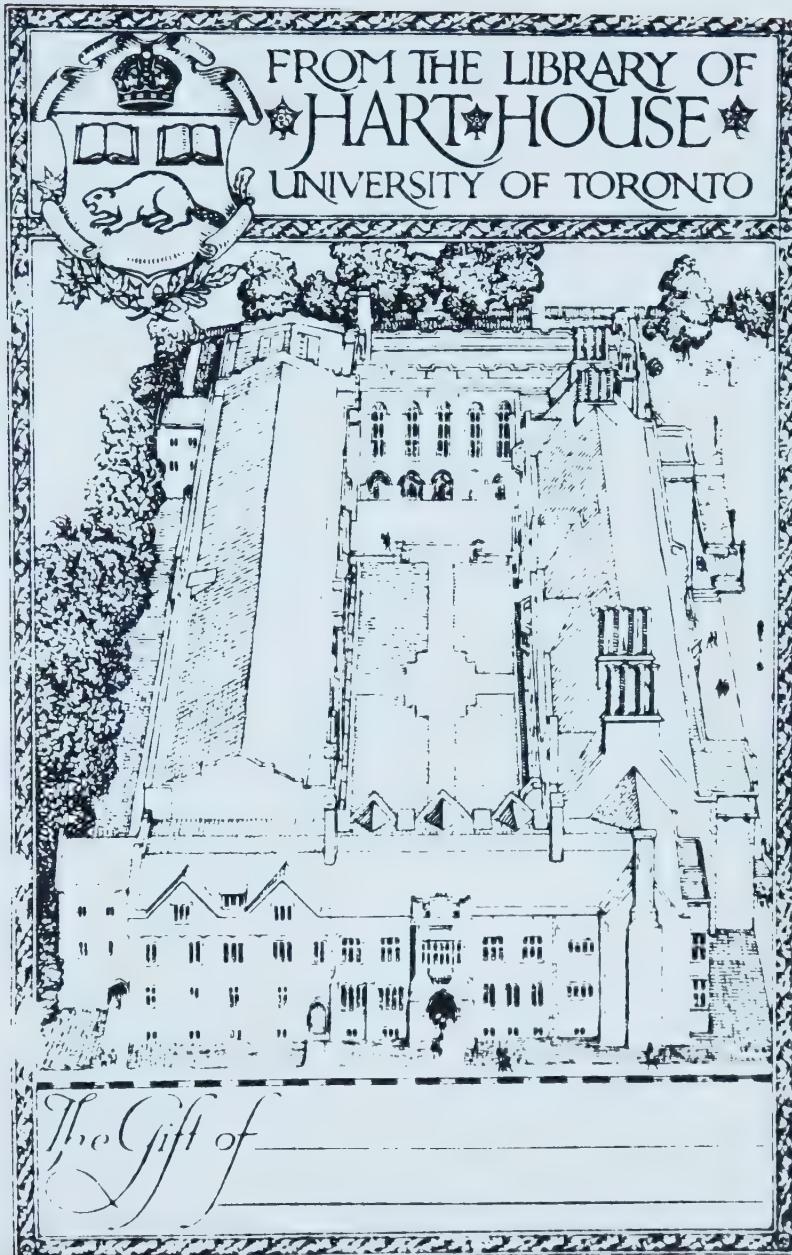


Plate 95

Bookplate, Hart House
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

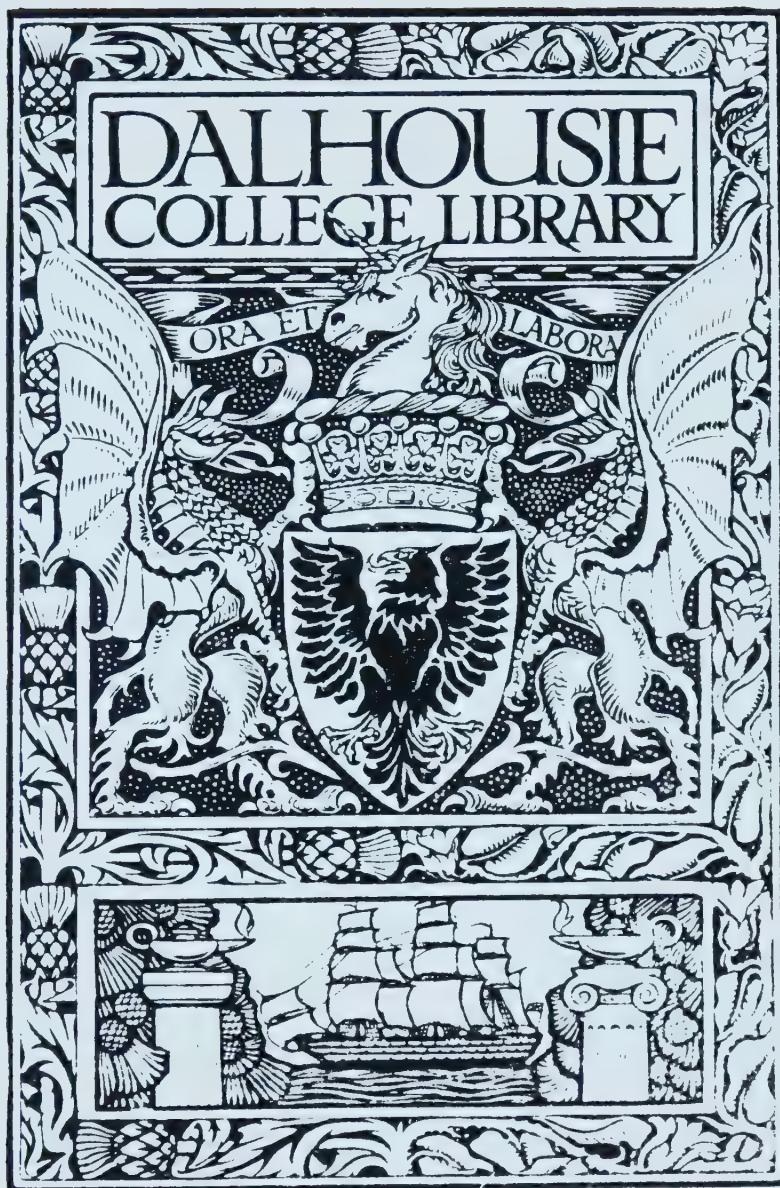


Plate 96

Bookplate, Dalhousie College Library
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection



Plate 97

Bookplate, Doris Huestis Mills
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

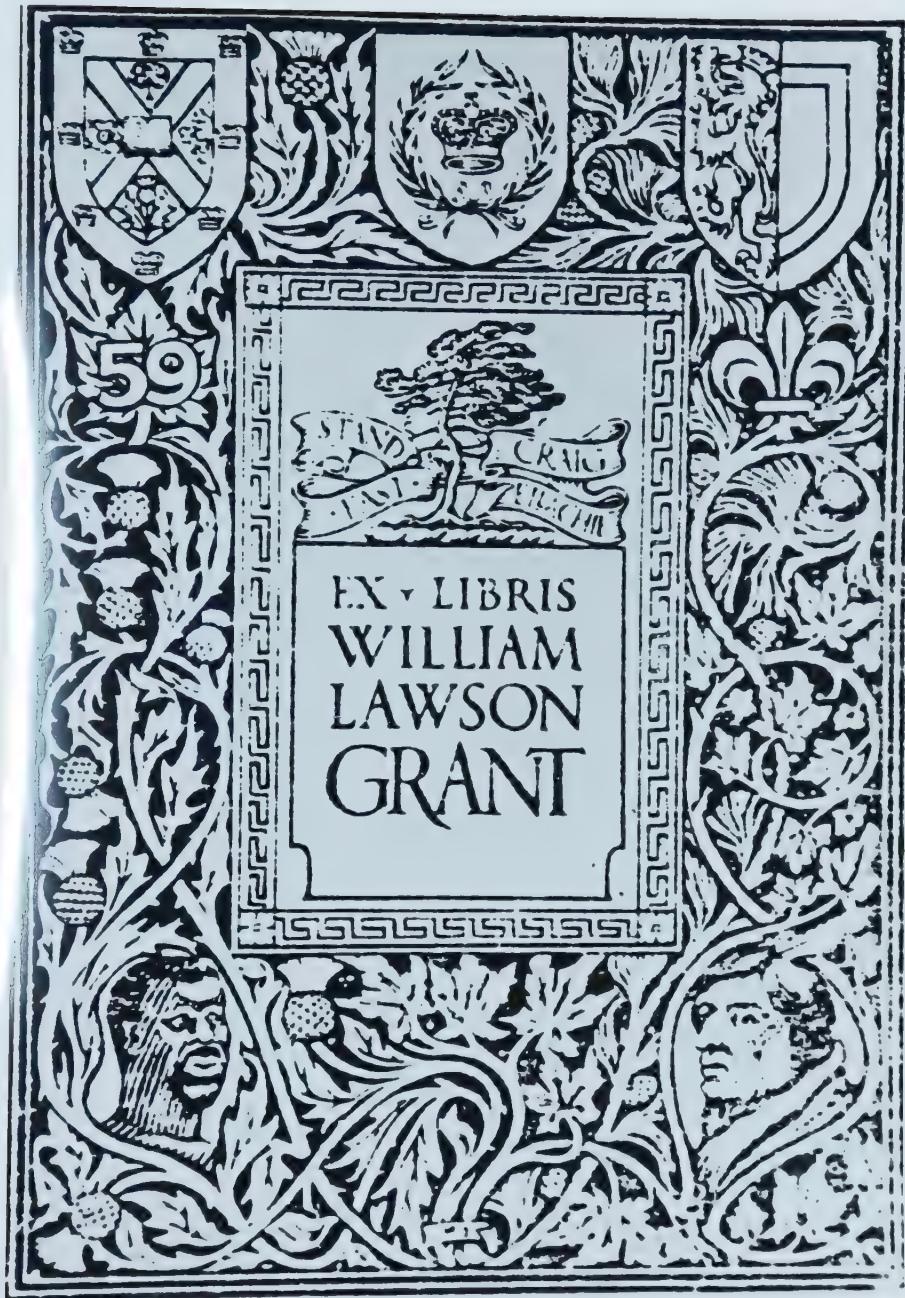


Plate 98

Bookplate, William Lawson Grant
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

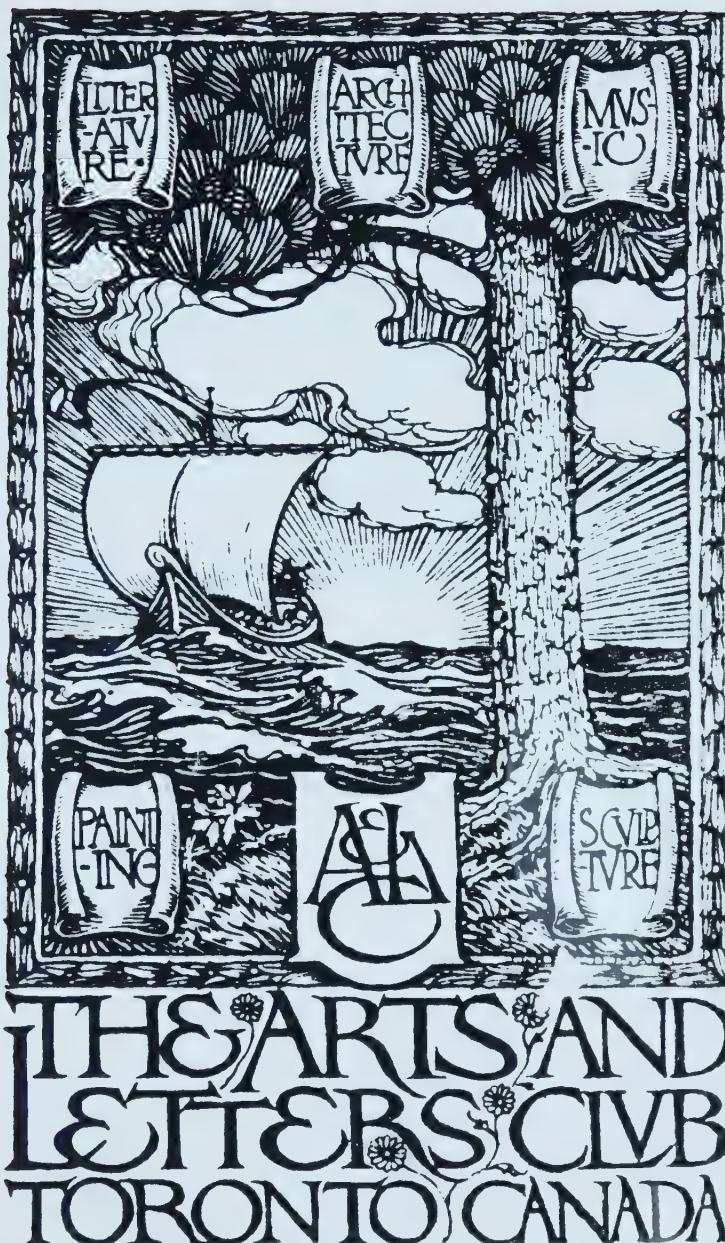


Plate 99

Bookplate, The Arts and Letters Club
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

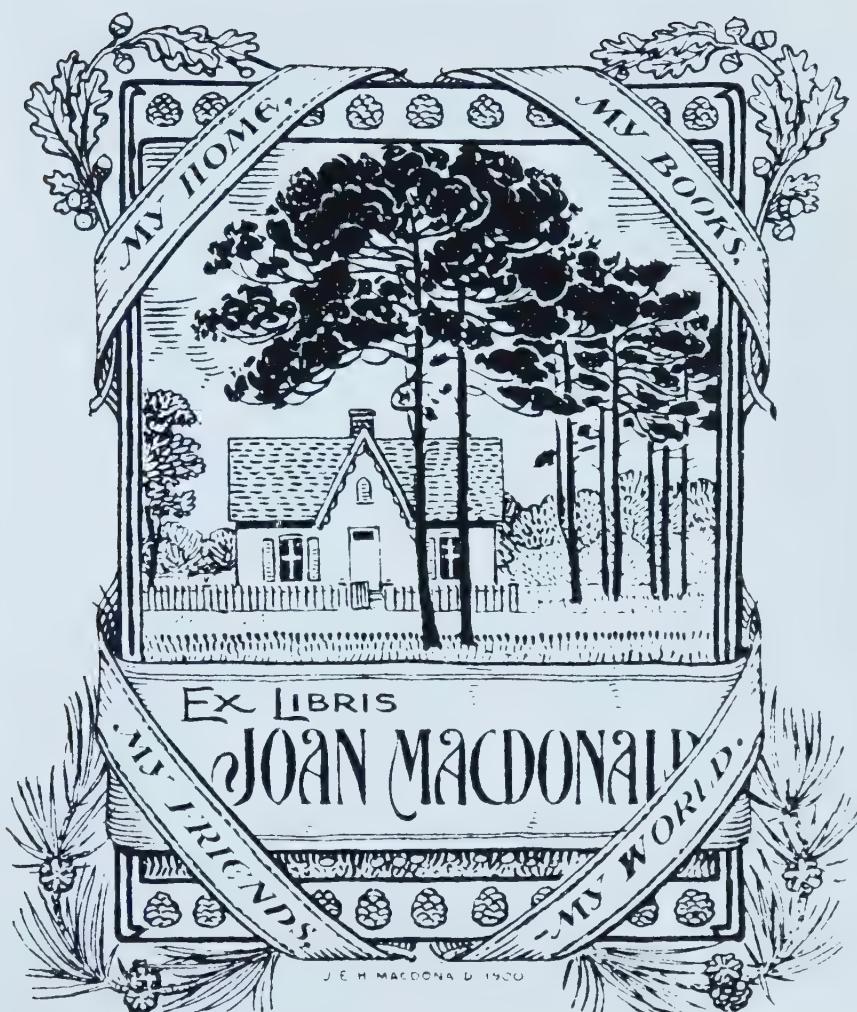
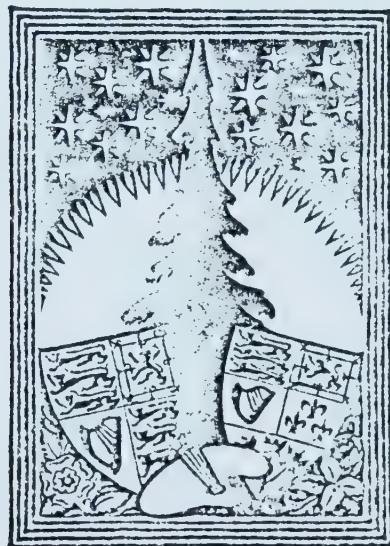


Plate 100

Bookplate, Joan MacDonald
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: private collection

A PORTFOLIO
OF PICTURES
FROM THE CANADIAN
SECTION OF FINE ARTS
BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION
LONDON 1924



Catalogue cover, 1924
British Empire Exhibition
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: National Gallery of Canada,
Ottawa

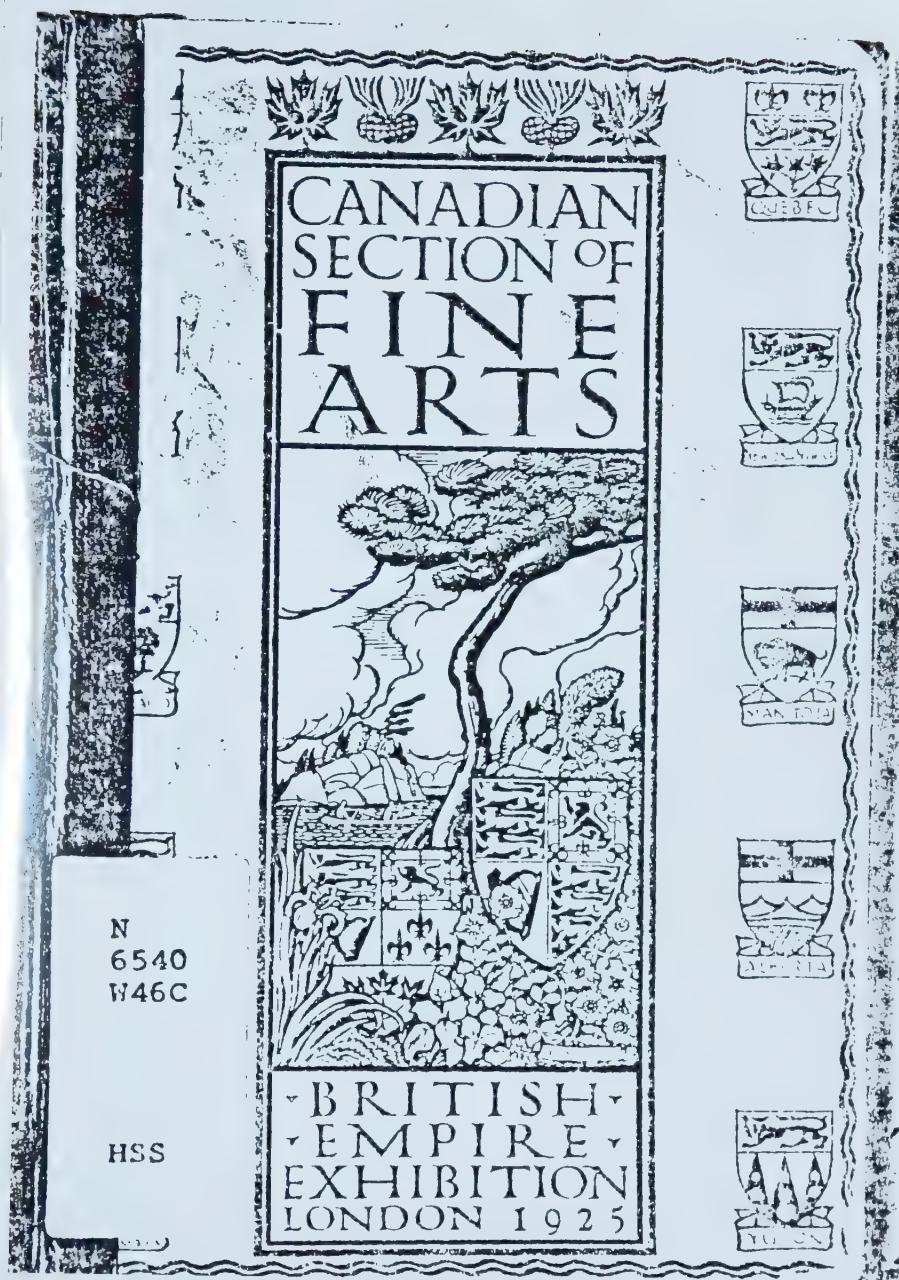


Plate 102

Catalogue cover, 1925
 British Empire Exhibition
 designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
 Location: National Gallery of Canada,
 Ottawa

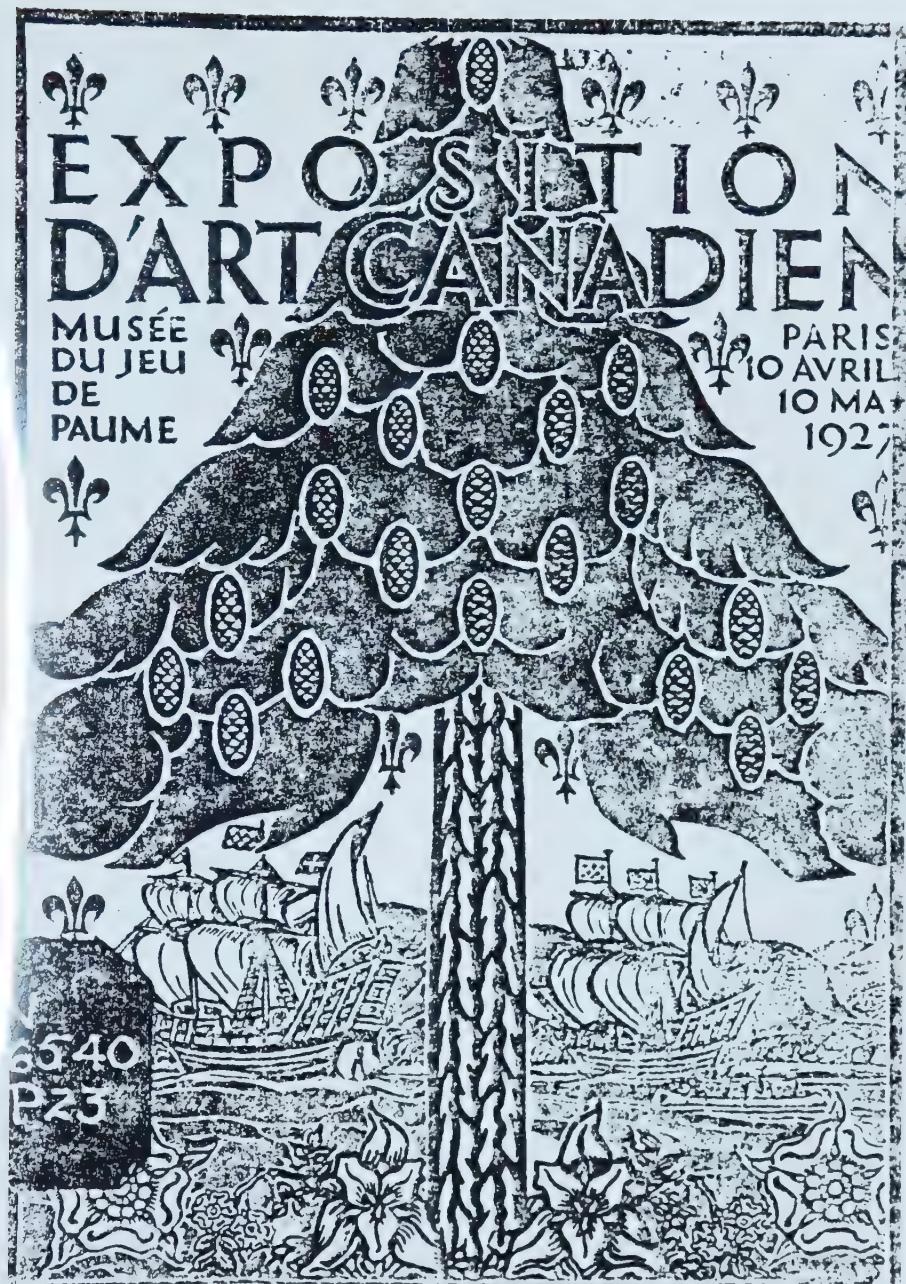


Plate 103

Catalogue cover, 1927
Exposition d'Art Canadien, Paris
designer: J.E.H. MacDonald
Location: National Gallery of Canada,
Ottawa



Plate 104

Wild Ducks

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on panel, 1917
47 1/2" x 58 3/4"

Location: Agnes Etherington Art Centre,
Kingston, Ontario



Plate 105

Church by the Sea
J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1924
4" x 5"

Location: private collection



Plate 106

Mount Goodsir

J.E.H. MacDonald
oil on canvas, 1925

42" x 48"

Location: private collection

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correspondence (Lawren Harris) 1916-1919;
Xerox copies, correspondence 1917-1932;
Notebooks [eight]; Miscellaneous;
Additional; Poetry: Village and Fields,
West by East.

Vol. II:

Poetry, A - C, D - L, 1917?-1931
H - P, 1918-1932
R - S, 1916-1931
T - Y, 1918-1929/n.d.
Poetry m.s. n.d. 1917-1918

Vol. III

Poetry, bound m.s. 1899? [sic] / 1900-1918;
Lectures and Notes; Miscellaneous m.s.;
Miscellaneous files.

The McMichael Collection Archives, Kleinburg, Ontario.

This archival material, in 1985, was in the process of organization into subjects and files. Papers pertaining to J.E.H. MacDonald's papers were in a "Miscellaneous" file which included the quoted undated letter from MacDonald to Lismer.

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